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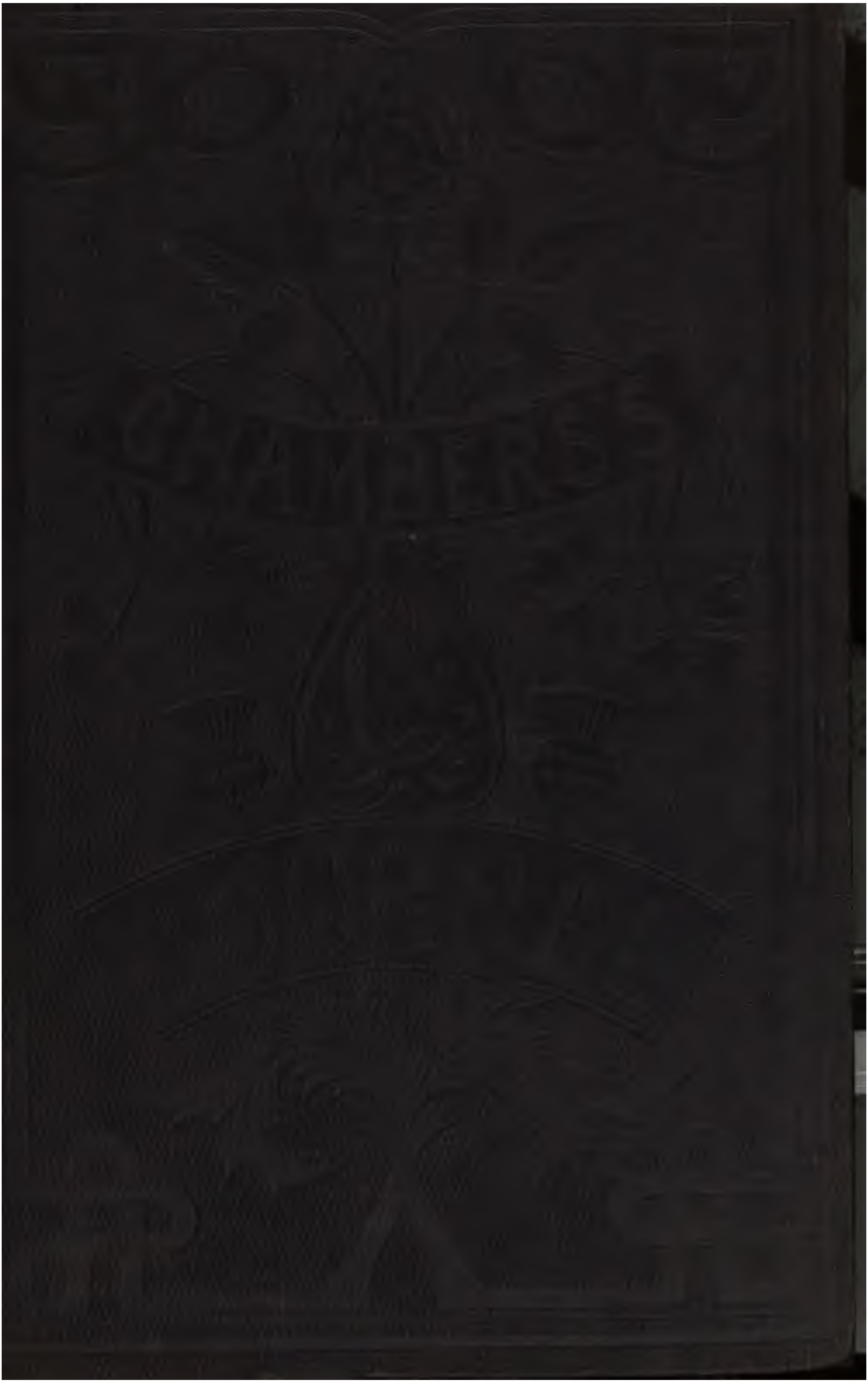

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THROUGH THE FLOODS IN PIEDMONT.

While on my travels, the autumn before last, I was called back from Milan to England. I made my way by the route of Novara, Mortara, and Alessandria, from the late head-quarters of the Austrian army, to the fortress round whose walls the French and Sardinian armies were but now assembled. If my readers care to hear of the difficulties of that journey, they will easily understand why the Austrians should have been willing to forego any advantage that might have been gained by moving forward through the floods.

It was late in the October of 1857, when the *vetturino*, with the huge pile of luggage at the top, turned the corner of the Strada dei trè Alberghi, and disappeared. It contained all my travelling-companions, who went on to spend the winter at Rome, leaving me at Milan, to make my way back alone to London. I turned into the Albergo Reale forlorn and disconsolate, and was presented by the porter with my pass from the police—a temporary substitute for a passport, until I should reach the English consulate at Turin.

I received it not without joy, for the *chef* at the bureau of police in the morning had felt himself quite master of the situation; and, after displaying the usual amount of Austrian incivility, had shewn considerable acuteness in taking objections to the validity of my father's passport, on which the safety of the whole family depended.

The two preceding days had been rainy, so a gleam of sunshine tempted me to climb up once more to the cupola of the cathedral. There are days when from the cathedral of Milan you can see the wall of snowy Alps on the north, and the range of Apennines on the south, bounding the broad plain of Lombardy. But though the sun was bright, the horizon was still heavy with rain-clouds, and both Alps and Apennines were veiled from view.

The roof of the cathedral is—I trust we may now read *was*—a favourite lounge of the Austrian soldiers, who come up here to smoke their pipes, to expectorate on the heads of the population below, and to look down, like sailors from a ship's top, upon 'the waveless plain of Lombardy.' It is pleasant to them to see the fields of Indian corn edged with endless rows of pollard mulberries, on the deep pastures and water-meadows, and the rice-grounds along the river-banks, of all which they are, at this present writing, the masters. It is not unpleasant to them to see Novara in the distance, the scene of their last victory. There are, too, some other battle-fields, a little nearer, such as Pavia and Lodi; but they are not so fresh in the soldiers' memories.

After sufficiently enjoying the beautiful to look at, I went in search of the good to eat at the *table-d'hôte;* fortified myself for my journey, and at midnight started in the *coupé* of the diligence for Ticino, in company with an enthusiastic sportsman with a double-barrelled gun, the 21st of October being the first day of woodcock-shooting in Lombardy. At the frontier, the Austrian examination of passports delayed us half an hour. Crossing the Ticino, which was running with a full stream through all the eleven arches of the Ponte Nuovo, a fine granite bridge, 1000 feet in length, we were again delayed an hour at the town of Ticino, on the Sardinian side, while our baggage was being searched. Here we were met by the news that the floods were out, in consequence of the late heavy rains, and the railway between Novara and Turin impassable; so that travellers for Turin would have to go round by Alessandria—just double the distance; and when we reached Novara, yet worse news awaited us.

Novara is a species of Crewe, differing from it in that it is an Italian town with an old Lombard cathedral; but resembling it in this, that it is a centre where four lines of railway meet, from Maggiore on the north, from Alessandria on the south, from Ticino on the east, and from Turin on the west, and in ordinary times exactly the place for a *blâsé* tourist, because you can get away from it so easily; but now every line, except that by which we had arrived, had been rendered impassable by the rains. The northern line was broken at Sesto Calende; while the river Po had just carried away a bridge at Settimo, on the western line, and an embankment at Torrebereti, between us and Alessandria—not to mention that the line between Turin and Alessandria was also up. In short, a large portion of the 'waveless plain' was under water, and the roads as impassable as the railways.

The inns at Novara were full of English travellers, who had all started hopefully the preceding day for Genoa, had arrived within a few miles of Alessandria, and been compelled to turn back again, in consequence of the water on the line threatening to put out the fire of the engine, in which case they would have become a fixture in the middle of the floods. The train was backed to Valenza, and the travellers returned safely to Novara. But, alas, in the hurry, the luggage-van was left behind at Valenza. Two hours after their return to Novara, the railway embankment gave way at Torrebereti, and an impassable gulf was fixed between them and their luggage. In the retreat, the baggage was lost.

The station at Novara was a mournful sight: elderly gentlemen stood on the platform, gazing down the line, to see, like sister Ann, if anything was coming; but in vain. They wandered recklessly about on the rails; and the officials did not interfere, for there was no chance of their being run over. They cast jealous looks at my one carpet-bag, for I was the only Englishman in Novara who had a razor. I was a man looked up to, and my acquaintance cultivated.

Life at Novara was something like life at a watering-place in England; every two hours we went down to the station and turned our faces to the floods, in hopes to see, not the steamer, but a train come in. The platform was the fashionable promenade. At night we went in desperation to the theatre; people in misfortune often do, but only the heaviest affliction could drive a man to a theatre which smelt as the theatre at Novara did. Next morning, when I asked the landlord for news, he replied: 'Niente.' When I inquired after the railway trains, he still used the hated phrase, *tutti suppressi.* We began to feel like caged starlings; common misfortune drew us together; and a triple alliance was formed between a fellow-countryman whom we will call Scot, an elderly silk-merchant of Friuli, and myself. Scot and I breakfasted at the station, he with his face turned to Valenza, where his luggage was. Poor fellow! he was haunted by the idea that a saffron tint was spreading over his shirt-front.

While at breakfast, we were informed that the telegraph between us and Alessandria had suddenly become dumb, and that they were about to shut up the station-house. A feeling of desperation came over me; I ordered a glass of a liqueur advertised on the wall as 'Costume.' It was rank aniseed. We walked back into the town again, and spent an hour in the market-place. It was a comfort to see that there was no chance of starvation; capsicums and peppers, vegetables and fruits of every description, were piled in heaps. The countrywomen were standing in double ranks, back to back, each with her basket on her arm, and her poultry on the ground in front of her. The ducks were tied together by the legs, and lay prone on the ground quacking without ceasing; the turkeys stood demurely by the side of their mistresses, and dressed the line like Austrian soldiers, apparently overwhelmed by their impending fate; the pairs of young white pigeons sat side by side in little baskets, or were carried by the wings in the hand. The women's head-dresses were a great resource for us spectators—a gaudy kerchief tied over a buy-a-broom-shaped framework, to which it is fastened by a large metal pin in front. Some wore a skewer through the back-part, with a silver bead at each end, the size of a very elongated hen's egg. Every description of silver knob was to be seen among these family jewels, donned for market-day, and all equally heavy and inelegant.

In the market-place, the news reached us that a train was starting at 10 A.M. to Torrebereti, to take workmen down to try and stop the breach in the embankment. A council of war was held. Scot and I determined to go by the train as far as it went, and then to try and make our way through the floods: the silk-merchant, Mercator Metuens, hung back. He urged that it would be hopeless to leave Novara until the post-office received letters from Turin; then we should know that the passage was feasible; that the post was stopped, and it was absurd to suppose that we could do what the government, with all its resources, could not. To which Scot replied, that Heaven helped those who helped themselves, but not those Italians who waited for somebody in authority to help them; that we would go to Torrebereti by the train, and view the floods, and try whether it was not possible to get on by boat or carts; and that, at any rate, we should get more excitement than by stopping at Novara. Mercator was not to be roused either by taunts or arguments. He replied that he was sixty years of age, and did not mean to be drowned yet, and that we were young and foolish; and he gave us his blessing, and went back to his inn.

So I invested four francs in a vast purple cotton umbrella with a rich border—the umbrella of the country; shouldered my carpet-bag thereon, and pointed out to Scot, as we walked down to the station for the last time, the advantages he enjoyed in being without luggage.

There was a train, and the train started. We crossed the flat fields close to the town, where the battle of Novara was lost and won; went slowly down to Mortara, where we took up a multitude of workmen. We then went on yet more slowly, as if there were misgivings about the soundness of the line; but at each crossing and by-station, the pointsman made us a military salute with his hand to his hat, and presented arms with his walking-stick, which warlike gestures in his own country signify all 's well. Between Sartirana and Torrebereti we began to enter the floods. On the right hand of the line, the water was high, up to the necks of the pollard willows; and the railway embankment was alive with little frogs, which pattered into the water, as we moved along, in a veritable shower. The floods had driven them to the embankment, and the train drove them back into the floods; their enemies, the snakes, too, were swarming among them, and took to the water with equal readiness. On our left hand, the flood was not so high, but seemed to be rising, and was running strongly towards us.

When we got out at Torrebereti station, we found that a fresh chasm had just been made in the embankment, about half a mile further on. As we approached it, a woman met us, the very picture of terror, shrieking as she ran, with her black hair streaming behind her. The weight of the water on the right of the line pressing against the inside of a curve, where the embankment was about thirty feet high, had, as it were, forced out the keystone of the arch; and through a chasm, perhaps forty yards wide, the angry, pea-soup coloured flood was rolling down towards the unfortunate village of Torrebereti. The muddy waves at the tail of the mill-race ran at least six feet high, with a roar and vibration that made us wish ourselves on *terra firmior.* To attempt to fill up the chasm was about as hopeful a task as to dam up Niagara. The light soil was crumbling down at a fearful rate, falling in by wagon-loads; the water was tearing the bottom away, and the top going down in great land-slips. The workmen whom we had brought took up the rails at the edge of the chasm, and then looked on helplessly; and so did we. There had been a boat there that morning, but it was gone. Carts would not have helped us, had there been any, and our thoughts reverted to Mercator at his inn.

But it would never do to go back. We fraternised with another Englishman, who had an Italian wife with him. He spoke the language fluently, and was an accession to our forces; but we looked doubtfully on the little wife, who was in a somewhat delicate state. The signora herself had no fears, and encouraged us much by her evident belief that her husband could get through any difficulties. A territorial proprietor of the neighbourhood, who, when at home, lived at a farm somewhere at the bottom of the flood, cheered us also by confidently asserting that the boat must return soon. The train departed with the workmen, and we remained behind, with the flood on our right hand and on our left, and the torrent in front, sitting on the bank like souls waiting for Charon, and with the painful alternative, that if the boat did not arrive, we should have to walk sixteen miles back along the line to Mortara. The sun shone brightly, and I lit the pipe of patience, and sat the very image of *rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis*. The chasm, in two hours and a half, had already lowered the flood on the right side two feet. Patience was nearly out, and the pipe was out and lit again, when the proprietor of the land covered by water—whom we had familiarly nicknamed Boots, from his wearing his Wellingtons outside his trousers—suddenly began to yell and gesticulate like a maniac at a small object moving among the pollard willows in the distance. It was *the* boat. We felt all the hopes and fears of shipwrecked mariners when a sail appears on the horizon. They saw us, and came to our assistance; made a cautious detour, to avoid the suction of the breach, and reached the side of the embankment. Boots engaged the boat for us for the sum of twelve francs. Boots sent a minion of his own, who procured for us, I know not whence, two bottles of wine, some bread, sausages, and cheese. The signora feared nothing, took off her bonnet, that the willows might not knock it off as we squeezed between them, sat on a board in the middle of the boat, and dispensed the provisions; found a tumbler in her basket, and served out the wine. Never was such a composed little woman in perils and dangers! The proprietor of the boat came with us, and so did Boots.

A naturalist might have filled his note-book during our little voyage. There were drowned insects to be fished out by scores; but the half-grown locusts were rowing about like small eight-oared galleys, and must have taken a long time to drown, even in the Red Sea. A rat, too, came and appealed to be taken into our ark; but Boots scoffed at him, and he had to return to the top of a pollard willow, and roost there until the waters subsided, and the rice-fields appeared once more. After a voyage of about half a mile, we landed again on the embankment, the courteous Boots accompanying us, and insisting on his man carrying the signora's wraps and my carpet-bag. We crossed the Po by a magnificent bridge of many arches, recently built by Mr Brassey, and therefore proof against all floods, and walked about two miles along the line, until we came to breach number two. This was an enormous gap, as the embankment was higher, and the flood had been rushing through it for two days. The telegraph-wires were broken down, and by good-luck, the superintendent was there with his boat, attempting to repair them, who kindly volunteered to ferry us across with him.

After taking an affecting farewell of the generous Boots, upon whom I with difficulty pressed a few good cigars, we embarked again. This was a more perilous voyage, for the stream was strong, and our punt-poles short, and once we brought-to in the top of a pollard willow at a very critical moment, when our boatmen were nearly exhausted. We landed on the side of a very steep embankment—a trying bit for the poor signora; but at the top there was an engine with its steam up, waiting to take the superintendent of telegraphs and us to Alessandria. We stopped at Valenza, about two miles further on; and there, on the deserted platform, stood a large pile of English luggage—hat-boxes at the bottom—from which my companions helped themselves liberally. We started again upon our heaven-sent engine, which brought us past Val Madonna, within three miles of Alessandria, where the line was sodden and disorganised, and the very spot from which the train had turned back two days before.

The stoker and engine-driver carried our baggage across some fields to the high road, where we waited for half an hour, the centre of a circle of admiring turkeys and peasants, who wondered where on earth, or water, or under the earth—for our faces were as black as the stoker's—we had come from. At length our good angel, the superintendent of telegraphs, procured us two market-carts, in which we took to the water again, steering cautiously by the telegraph-wires which ran by the roadside. We passed one farmyard where the proprietor was paddling mid-leg deep, towing some of his chattels behind him in a raft formed of two mangers. The road brought us to the line from Turin to Alessandria; a train was stopping at the time, and the poor little signora stepped from her seat in the cart into a first-class carriage, all but exhausted.

'OUR FARM OF FOUR ACRES, AND THE MONEY WE MADE BY IT.'*

This is a tempting sort of book; tempting in its title, tempting in its opening, and in its slight disclosures of family circumstances; and, above all, tempting in its descriptions of the comforts and luxuries of rural life on a small scale—that is, with its elegances, and without its coarsenesses. On seeing the advertisement, a hundred people in a day, no doubt, think 'I must get a sight of that book.' On getting a sight of it, half the hundred will probably conclude to buy it for the sake of reference; and nearly all the hundred will be conscious of a hankering after a small farm, with its cream and new potatoes, its fine home-cured hams, and pease and asparagus, and young ducks and custards, and wall-fruit without end. Of those who hanker, some may have been previously uncertain about their plan of life; and this book will be pretty sure to send such readers forth in search of a farm of four acres, more or less, in full confidence of making money by it. Now, we have nothing to say against small farming in itself, for those to whom it is suitable. The right sort of family being set down on the land, it may be prosperous and content on fifty acres, on thirty, on ten, and, as John Sillet has shewn, on two. We are ready to go any lengths with successful experimenters in recommending the advantages of open-air occupations, of natural interests, and of doing something indisputably useful every day—to say nothing of the luxuries of the table, and, consequently, increased power of hospitality, which arise from the possession of even a small portion of land. But all advantages have their price; and it is particularly necessary for persons who are not rich enough to take an easy quantity of acres, to make sure that they are not risking too much by following the lead of a sanguine adviser. After a good deal of personal experience of some very small farming under very favourable circumstances, we are disposed to sympathise in the honest enthusiasms of the genial ladies of this four-acre farm, who would like the whole world to be as comfortable as themselves; but we are also thoroughly convinced that if these excellent women go on improving their habits of business, and publish another account of their experience at the end of five years, their second book will be less dangerous than their first.

The experiment was this. Two ladies, and the six children of one of them, had to seek a home, and choose a way of life very suddenly, and without the freedom which a good income affords. They had, we are told, but a small income; and the rent they could afford to give was not to exceed L.70. The account of the house-hunting is entertaining. They followed up the advertisements of houses suitable in price; and, under the guidance of the *Times*, spent many pounds, and travelled over scores of miles of suburban ground, in search of rural paradises which turned out examples of every sort of disagreeableness. The first ten pages give us excellent sketches of these fruitless journeys; and then the first stage of the business ended thus:

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* London. 1859.

'I fear I should tire the patience of the reader did I detail all our "adventures in search of a house;" but we must entreat indulgence for our last journey. We once more started on the South-western line to see a house, which, from the assurances we had received from the owner, resident in London, must at last be *the* house, and for which the rent asked was L.70; but once more were we doomed to disappointment by finding that the "handsome dining and drawing rooms" were two small parlours, with doors opening into each other; and that "five excellent bed-chambers" were three small rooms and two wretched attics.

'From the station to this place was four miles; and as, weary and hopeless, we were returning to it, it occurred to H—— to ask the driver if he knew of any houses to let in the vicinity. He considered, and then said he only knew of one, which had been vacant some time; and that parties who had been to see it, would not take it, because it was situated in a bad neighbourhood.

'At the commencement of our search, that would have been quite sufficient to have deterred us from looking at it; but we could not now afford to be fastidious. Our own house was let, and move from it we must, in less than a fortnight; so we desired the driver to take us into this bad neighbourhood, and were rewarded for the additional distance we travelled by finding an old-fashioned, but very convenient house, with plenty of good-sized rooms in excellent repair; a very pretty flower-garden, with greenhouse; good kitchen-garden of one acre; an orchard of the same extent, well stocked with fine fruit-trees; three acres of good meadow-land; an excellent coach-house and stabling, with houses for cows, pigs, and poultry—all in good order.

'The "bad neighbourhood" was not so very bad. The cottages just outside the gates were small, new buildings, and, once inside, you saw nothing but your own grounds. It possessed the advantage of being less than two miles from a station, and not more than twelve from London.

"This will do," we both exclaimed, "if the rent is not too high."

'We had been asked L.120 for much inferior places, so that it was with great anxiety we directed our civil driver to take us to the party who had the disposal of the house. When there, we met with the welcome intelligence that house, gardens, orchard, meadows, and buildings were all included in a rental of L.70 per annum. We concluded the bargain there and then, and that day fortnight took possession of our "farm of four acres."'

It will at once strike the reader that here were five acres, and not four—namely, 'three acres of good meadow-land,' a 'good kitchen-garden of one acre,' and 'an orchard of the same extent.' We presently find that half the kitchen-garden so much more than supplied the vegetables required by the family as to support four pigs, but for which cart-loads of produce would have been thrown away. So here we have half an acre of land, and a considerable quantity of produce for farming purposes, under the name of a kitchen-garden; and we may add to it the whole acre of orchard, for the ground 'was all arable,' we are told, and the crops sown there grew as well as if there had been no trees in the way. Thus, it was a farm of five acres to begin with. Near the end of the book, when we have long been wondering what was done with the cows when the meadows were shut up for hay, it comes out that there was a right of common into the bargain. We are delighted that there was. We know enough of the anxieties of May and June, when the winter-food is done, and the pasture must be shut up, and yet the beasts must be fed, to be able to congratulate the ladies on being always sure of help at a pinch—on being always secure that, in any case, the cows would not fast. But the establishment could not be said to live on the four acres (or five) while the cows were grazing on the common. There is no saying how many creatures may live on two acres, or one, if there is a common at their elbow to stop all gaps. 'We were enabled,' says our author, 'to mow the whole three acres, as we had "common rights" in our neighbourhood, where the cows could pasture during the spring'—an advantage equivalent to full an additional acre, even if the 'rights' were used at no other season.

The settling in the bright home is very pleasantly told: the hopes from the new cow, and the congress of children with their mugs at the first milking, and the scrape 'Madam Sukey' got them and herself into by regularly kicking down pail, man, and stool in spite of two stout neighbours to help, the fine second cow that fell ill directly, and the cure of the morals and physics of each; the complaints from the nursery that the new milk is *too* good; the picture of the dinner-table, with its profusion of juicy, sweet vegetables, so unlike the flabby greens and withered pease, and tasteless asparagus bought in the towns; the dessert, with its unbruised peaches and apricots, and shining cherries and gooseberries; the vast array of bottled fruit, making it summer at dinner-time all the winter through; and, above all, the ladies' own share in the domestic transactions, and especially in the butter-making. All this is pleasant; and the glow of health and independence all through is really animating. The defect is in the estimates chiefly, though there are some errors of a lighter quality; but the mistakes on economical points are so grave as to call for special mention. It must be remembered that the work is offered as 'a perfect manual for a farm of four acres.'

To take the one department of the dairy. Our ladies tell us that 'an acre of grass is usually considered sufficient to support a cow during the year.' This is assuredly a mistake. If they had said an 'acre of ground,' we should have supposed they meant by means of spade-husbandry. Cobbett used to pretend that a quarter of an acre would suffice, under good tillage; and though this is not otherwise than exceptionally true, it might be fairly said that an acre would much more than feed a cow; but an acre *of grass* cannot possibly suffice, and, for our part, we never heard of less than two being assigned, and more commonly three. Perhaps 'the common' behind the curtain may eke out the acre. The rent per acre is set down at L.5—rather high, except near London. The only other expenses exhibited are getting in the hay, and oil-cake (18s. per cow) in winter. We hear nothing of the expenses of keeping the pasture; nothing of the necessary manure, the bone-dust or guano, which is indispensable over and above the stall-manure, which also is wanted for the tillage; nothing of the bush-harrowing and rolling of the grass, nor of the weeding and cleaning which every good pasture requires; nor of the care of fences; nor of the cost and repair of implements; nor of the wages of labour, except 15s. for the hay-making. So much for the pasture. When we come to the cows, of which our ladies kept three, with one calf, we find the produce set down —reckoning the milk at 3d. per quart, and butter at 1s. 3d. per pound (a high average), and the quantity at 'thirteen or fourteen quarts per day,' on an average—as worth L.23, 6s. 4d. for the half-year. We see no mention of the original cost of the cows, whereas the average of their time of service should divide that original cost, and the product should be added to the yearly cost—say, a seventh part of the cost of a cow of five years old, as it may be expected to be serviceable till twelve years old at latest. We find no margin allowed for the loss by exchange of cows—a thing which happens often on every small farm—nor for illness or death; nor for diminution of milk, nor even for the dry season before calving. Any cow which yields thirteen or fourteen quarts daily for the year round, is a marvel; but a group of three which should do so, will not be believed in by practical farmers. Then the hay set down is not enough, if no addition beyond 18s. worth of oil-cake in winter is allowed. Hay, and hay alone, except the little oil-cake, our ladies recommend, while declaring that their mowing yielded less than two tons and a half per acre—that is, less than seven tons and a half for three cows, a calf, and a pony. Now, as each milch-cow should have seventy-five pounds of food per day, this quantity of hay would not feed the three for three months, excluding calf and pony, and allowing for the oil-cake; whereas 'the winter' means, in the computation of cattle-food, four or five months, according to climate.

The oddest piece of information in the whole volume, perhaps, is, that mangold-wurzel makes butter 'strong and bitter.' That saccharine, mild, juicy vegetable giving the butter a strong and bitter taste! We can only suppose that the ladies were badly served; that they gave their lamented guinea for something bad under a good name. We, for our part, are more solicitous about our mangold crop than even the hay, if possible—so welcome and wholesome is it to the cows, and so beneficial to their produce. The crop from our small plot of mangold has this year lasted two hearty cows nearly into the summer, when drought would otherwise have occasioned a serious dilemma; and for the quality of the cream and butter, we might challenge these ladies, or any other dairywomen. Instead of apologising to the very pig for giving it mangold, it would be wise to offer it to the cows, to make up for the short commons of hay; and now that 'time is bringing about its revenges,' our ladies may be perceiving that the first six months, or even twelve, can afford no basis for a computation for a course of years. They must soon learn, if they have not learned already, that seven or eight tons of hay will not always feed four or five beasts through the winter; and they may have by this time found the high value of mangold, and the usefulness of even the despised 'brewers' grains,' when the cows are in fine appetite. They do mention carrots as applicable once, when hay was scarce; and even potatoes, adding: 'But these things are only required when you keep more stock than your land [meaning *pasture*] can support, a fault very common to inexperienced farmers on a small scale'—rather a curious observation from such a quarter.

Coming, now, to the produce, we find the value of the calf, at 'a few days old,' set down, without qualification, at a high figure. 'The price is L.1.' Now, the cow-calf, or 'wye,' may and does fetch from 25s. to 30s. at ten days or a fortnight old; but the bull-calf is not often bid for, or is saleable for something under 5s. No such distinction is made by these ladies, and, as we observed, they pass over the weeks—from five to ten—during which the cow is, or ought to be, dry before calving. They speak of it as a very moderate success to make eight pounds of butter per week from a single cow throughout the year; but they probably know better by this time about that, as well as concerning the average of milk per day.

We perceive some consideration of economy in the mention of glass apparatus for the dairy, which is spoken of as highly desirable, but expensive. Our experience differs from this, as far as glass milk-pans go. We found them cheaper to set up with than the older apparatus, and not liable to breakage, with ordinary care; but they are objectionable on a ground unsuspected by these ladies: the cream will not rise well in glass-pans. We reverted to the old-fashioned leaded cisterns, which are, in our opinion, incomparable, but by no means repenting our investment in cool-looking, greenish glass-pans; for they make charming drawing-room cisterns for water-lilies. One of these in each sitting-room and in the hall is almost as good as the domestic fountain in eastern houses for refreshment in the summer heats.

One of the most useful and amusing parts of this book is that which details the process of learning butter-making. The ladies could obtain no guidance from books, which are apt to tell everything about butter but the way to make it; and by this account, it is clear that they had not become acquainted with that little volume of Mr Knight's series, The Guide to Service, called *The Dairymaid*,* where the art is fully disclosed. With excellent spirit and sense, the novices set to work, and with admirable patience they conquered their difficulties, coming out, we perceive, first-class dairy-women, sure of their art, because understanding the reasons involved in it. Their only weak point is their rose-coloured spectacles. They tell us that they actually cleared by their dairy in six months L.15, 18s. 4d.; but considering that they have under-estimated expenses, and overlooked drawbacks, and omitted prime cost, and exaggerated both the produce and the market-value of it, we can only send them back to their sum, and hope they will bring it up again when they have learned how to make it correct.

We have not space to shew how the same failing runs through their account of the poultry-yard; but it may be useful to notice two or three points. If their first hen sat on thirteen eggs, and hatched from them thirteen chickens in March, which were fit for the table by the middle of May, and worth six shillings the couple, such a hen and chickens can be no rule for the generality. The ducklings are fairly admitted to be less profitable, though it is recommended that they should be allowed to run in the pasture—a practice notoriously fatal to ducklings. Between eating slugs or other creatures which kill them, and getting entangled in the grass, and cramped or lost, the ducklings which are sent into a meadow may be looked upon as a most precarious property. On the other hand, the ladies are certainly mistaken about the ill-luck of broods hatched in the hot months. On some accounts, and in some climates, the March broods may turn out best; but it is common for a late frost or a heavy rain to be more destructive than any heat, to say nothing of the sharp-set appetites of 'vermin,' hawks, cats, and other enemies of chicks, in early spring. We have seen no finer broods than some of ours hatched in July, and the July of a very hot summer.

In all that they can say of the comfort of bacon and hams derived from well-educated pigs, the ladies have our warm sympathy; but our understanding does not follow them in their process of fattening a pig of thirteen stone for ten shillings. We are not told how old the pig was when bought; but as it cost thirty shillings, it could hardly have been less than four months old. It was killed in three months, when it had had just ten shillings' worth of meal and peas during its latter days of fattening. Now, though we have the same distaste as our author for overfat pork, we never knew a pig, even so young as this, made fit for the butcher under a lower diet than sixteen stone of meal; and this, at one shilling and sixpence a stone, amounts to twenty-four shillings. So much for the pig, which would have answered better, in the neighbourhood of such a garden and household, if bought young at from ten to fifteen shillings, and thoroughly meal-fed for three weeks or a month before sending for the butcher, instead of being played fast and loose with, with 'a little meal and a few pease' within a month of its utilisation. In a yet commoner—the very commonest—article of cookery, bread-making, our ladies may transcend the point of success we are glad to see they have reached. Instead of water, let them use milk, which so abounds in their house; and then their London friends will praise their loaf more than ever.

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* On turning to this little book, we see that the proper average quantity of butter per cow in a dairy county is set down at six pounds per week in summer, and three pounds in winter. It is a serious thing to tempt a novice with the prospect of eight pounds on the average of the year, and in an apologetic tone!

Finally, let them remember that farm-stock costs money in the first instance, which must enter into any fair estimate of the *pros* and *cons* of farming, large or small; and that there *are* such things as bad seasons in the land, and diseases and accidents among quadrupeds and fowls; and hawks, and cats, and rats, and frosts, and floods among chicks, ducklings, and pigeons; and that, therefore, a flourishing half-year at the outset is, we repeat, no basis for a calculation on which serious consequences may depend. Not only do we miss all notice of the cost of implements, manure, and special acts of tillage, but even all reference to the wages of labour. It is true, with five acres of ground and a pony-carriage, there must be a man on the premises, farming or no farming; but it will scarcely be pretended that one man can take proper care of four or five beasts in stall and stable, and the carriage, besides the three or four pigs, and a large kitchen-garden and flower-garden, and an orchard which is, in fact, an acre of arable land, and three acres of pasture. Even if the mistresses, maids, and children undertake the dairy and poultry-yard, the pigeons and greenhouse, here is more than any man living can possibly get through. We suspect that a little more experience will shew the necessity of adding above L.30 a year, for additional labour, to the list of expenses.

The candid chapter on rabbits shews that our complacent instructress has no desire to deceive. It is the sad old story over again which so many of us could tell: of the pining and mortality among pretty white does and their innocent offspring, till their family grave-yard is full; and the way to have no more children's tears is found to be to have no more rabbits. The pigeons did better; even brilliantly, it appears, though the family abode does not stand in an oasis. These pigeons seem to have bred no quarrels among neighbours. We must quote an anecdote on which we should make the same comment as our author, who never puts pets into pies. The contents of her pigeon-pies 'were taken from the nest as soon as they were fledged.'

'We were one day much amused by a clergyman of our acquaintance who kept a great number of these birds in a room, and who, in default of children to pet, made pets of his pigeons. At dinner, a pigeon-pie made part of the repast. This was placed opposite a visitor, who was requested to carve the dainty. He did so, and sent a portion of it to his host. The reverend gentleman looked at the plateful sent him attentively, and then said, with a sigh: "I will trouble you to exchange this for part of the other bird. *This* was a peculiar favourite, and I always fed it myself. I put a mark on the breast after it was picked, for I could not bear to eat the little darling!" We always thought that this sentimental divine had better either not have had "the little darling" put into the pie, or have swallowed his feelings and his favourite at the same time.'

Here we must leave the agreeable scene disclosed to us by ladies, whose energy, frankness, and honest enthusiasm we cordially respect, and to whom we wish a long continuance of the health, cheerfulness, and prosperity they so well deserve by their choice of a rational mode of life for themselves and their household. We should be exceedingly happy to know that their example is followed by some of the many women who are sorely in want of something to do; and the more we desire this, the more anxious we are that the sound guidance of the example should not be turned into a snare by defects in the statement of the case. Hence our criticisms, when our mood was altogether one of sympathy and admiration.

THE INAPPLICATION OF CIRCLES.

As the round globe on which we live may be called a sort of solid circle made up of an infinity of other circles—composed of earth and water—within and upon each other, so the inhabitants of the said globe are similarly constituted of innumerable circles, likewise.

It is the title which society has agreed to bestow upon its own multitudinous phases, and is the very happiest, perhaps, which could possibly have been selected for that purpose. No other term could express, at once, completeness and insularity so well. Squares of society, rhomboids, parallelograms, might indeed suggest the compactness of these sets of the human family with equal accuracy, but could never bestow such an idea of independence. One side at least of such figures could coincide with, could be '*applied to*,' as Euclid has it, the side of another figure, and so amalgamate with it, which the things that they were intended to typify never can. Circles, on the other hand, can but touch one another in one point—which itself has no parts or magnitude—and the result even then is only friction and disagreement. When the big wheel of a carriage, for instance, happens to catch the little wheel—which only happens in general overturns and the like—no fusion of any kind takes place, but rather the reverse. Circles can *cut* one another, it is true, but *that* does not make the adaptation of their name, to social life, by any means less apposite. At all events, the term is universally acknowledged, and may be taken for granted. As 'the great world' represents in some mouths not the universe or its inhabitants, but a certain small quantity of individuals dwelling in an inextensive district of London, so 'the Circles,' pure and simple, is sometimes put for the *crême de la crême* of the divers cliques of the human family. We once knew a young gentleman refuse to ask for beer at a dinner-party because it was a thing not done 'in the Circles'—a curious method of expressing a no less curious state of artificial restraint.

Every Circle of society is bounded by a line of its own, supposititious like the equator, but not less distinctly defined; and as each of the countless stars of the firmament shares, doubtless, the impression of the author of *The Plurality of Worlds*, that there are no stars—with anything in them—beside itself, so each Circle ignores its fellows, and ludicrously imagines its own particular centre to be the centre of all other systems whatsoever. There is, however, one exception to this rule, the Best Circles, which are hankered after by the denizens of almost every other sphere.

Within their charmed round it is far more dangerous to tread than anywhere else; for not only are the blest indwellers of that retreat most superciliously scornful—as it is their undoubted privilege to be—of any would-be photographer of its likeness, but every little hanger-on to the extreme edge of its circumference, every grossest atom longing to fly up from its native earth to so elevated a sphere, is prone to take up the cudgels and hector in its defence, as though by such a course it intimated its own connection with it. 'You 've never been there yourself,' would be the malicious sarcasm cast upon any man who should attempt to describe the material of the moon, even though he should confine himself to reproducing the established theories of green cheese and moonshine; and the Best Circles are not unlike the moon in some respects. There is a mild, subdued, and almost religious light about them, which is borrowed from the great Sun of Etiquette. They form no catherine wheels of brilliant dissipation, as the Radicals would have us believe, but give forth a fine, steady, rose-coloured light, very overpowering and yet attractive to the British eye. Conversation, in the Best Circles, is carried on in a better fashion than in many more intellectual ones. Nobody has particular 'views' to enforce; nobody can get hold of the universal button-hole of a company, and bore them with an unlimited supply of dreary information. If there is not so much thinking in the Best Circles, as is usual with the majority of the human family, the people who compose them are at least all of the same way of thinking. There is, therefore, no rancorous abuse, no antagonistic obstinacy; no anything, in short, which interferes with the pleasant flow of conversational life. The stream may be sluggish and somewhat shallow, and even not unmixed with a very fair allowance of mud, but there is no bootless conflict with the stones, and no 'lashers' or eddies in which the metaphysical and other savage mental tribes delight to be whirled round and round without an object. Although it is the fashion of most novelists to place the *beau-idéal* of their Gentleman in the Best Circles, he is not often to be found there in the flesh. The Gallant is there, no doubt, but not the Knight. In scarcely any other Circles, indeed, are the chivalrous and self-denying elements less strong, while the enthusiasm is, almost without exception, of the 'early-pea' description, forced, and with very little flavour. Politeness, however, there imitates so many virtues, and fills their places, to all outward appearance, so well—the necessity for the use of the genuine articles being also exceedingly rare—that they are scarcely missed. In particular, from the consciousness that they interfere with the amenities of social life, which are cultivated in the Best Circles to great perfection, Egotism and even Selfishness are compelled to hide their more repulsive features—a victory which is elsewhere often unattainable by the highest convictions.

Our young friend who went without his favourite liquor out of deference to this body, performed a very superfluous act of self-denial. The native inhabitants of the Best Circles are the very last to become victims to mere formulæ: they may give out, to the vulgar, a very embarrassing code of regulations, and fence about their own approaches with the most ridiculous impediments, but they themselves are the freest people under the sun.

While, indeed, the full-dressed and uncomfortable snobs are struggling upon their tiptoes to get a glimpse over the enchanted pale, the nobs are lounging within it at their ease, in dressing-gown and slippers. The very few artificial folks one meets among them, careful about their conduct and behaviour, are always those who have no natural business there. Perfect naturalness—so long, that is, as the nature be not distressingly deep or earnest—which, in other societies, is the attribute of Genius alone, is indeed the peculiar virtue of the Best Circles, and constitutes their chiefest charm. The pains and penalties of *the social tread-mill*, the 'callings,' the 'cuttings,' the 'who-shall-take-whom-down-to-dinners,' are the embarrassments of comparatively low life, the barbarous enactments of persons who connect discomfort with aristocracy.

It is therefore no wonder that most other sections of Society, however exclusive, should make an exception in favour of such a class. Even the so-called Religious Circles smooth their brows and lengthen their lips when Sir Guy Beau Monde is whirling by, although it is well known that Lady Mabel has a separate establishment in Paris, and neither of them, if all tales be true, lead the lives of chastened persons: whereas, if it were Mr Thomas Brown (of the Commercial Circles) who was so often seen with that Mrs Sloper, whose husband has a colonial appointment, these pious folks would shiver, as he passed, from head to foot. Perhaps there is no class so altogether ignorant of the World without as theirs, nor any so indignant that the World in its turn should be unacquainted with them and their concerns.

We were once present in a company of our fellow-countrymen of the North, when the inferiority of the English happened to form the subject of conversation.

'To give you an idea,' said one, 'of the extreme ignorance of even their educated classes, I met an English barrister, last summer, at Oban, who did not know what I meant when I referred to the great Disruption. He positively understood me to be alluding to some volcanic disturbance!'

Only second to this Circle in their complete isolation from the rest of mankind, and in their belief, nevertheless, that they form the focus of attraction for all other classes, are, singularly enough, the Sporting Circles. The mystery of their tones, the solemnity of their manner, and the confidential character of their absurd communications, are beyond measure remarkable; nor do they conceive it possible that their casual companion in a railway carriage, or elsewhere, can be other than well informed of, at all events, all that *Bell's Life* can teach him.

We had once the privilege of sitting next to Miss Cruciform, a Tractarian young lady, at dinner, when Captain Marker St Leger, of the Sporting Circles, was making conversation to her upon the other side. It was when the robbery at Rogers's bank had just been effected, and this was the manner in which Captain St Leger broke ground in performing his colloquial duty to his neighbour:

'What a very sad thing that is about poor Sam Rogers, Miss Cruciform!'

'Yes, indeed; poor Samuel Rogers! Did you know him?' [The young lady was naturally surprised at the gallant captain's apparent intimacy with the Poetical Circles.]

'Know him! Ay, indeed; and I am afraid I shall lose a great deal of money by him too,' replied he.

'I trust not,' said she. 'I understand there is no danger of that.'

'Then you know a great deal more about it than me,' responded he, in a tone of annoyance; 'and yet I had it from Lord George himself.'

'Indeed! I saw it stated in the newspapers that the whole loss, at the worst, would not be more than thirty thousand pounds; and, in short, that it was nothing more than temporary inconvenience.'

'Newspapers! What do they know about it?' cried the excited captain. 'I tell you, Miss Cruciform, between ourselves, that I stand to win five thousand by the mare myself; and if Sam Rogers ain't well enough to ride'——

'To ride, Captain St Leger!' ejaculated the young lady. 'I am speaking of Mr Rogers the poet, whose bank was robbed last week of such a sum of money.'

'Dear me,' laughed the captain; 'and I was speaking of poor Sam Rogers the jockey, who broke his collar-bone on Tuesday, and won't be able to ride the favourite for the *Oaks* to-morrow.'

LIFE ALONG SHORE.

The action of the sea upon various parts of the English coast has long attracted the notice of philosophers, who have hitherto been unable to account satisfactorily for the contrary results produced by the same tides, within a distance of a few miles. On the eastern shore, for instance, the ocean has made frightful inroads for a long series of years: Dunwich was once called 'the splendid city,' and boasted an archiepiscopacy; nothing now remains of its grandeur but the dilapidated walls of one of the religious houses; and this solitary ruin owes its preservation to its cliff-built locality; for the invading waters have long since covered the site of the whole city. At Cromer, a market-town some short distance from Dunwich, the fishermen now cast their anchors amongst the dwellings of their fathers; and the remains of brick walls may distinctly be seen at neap-tides. Between these two instances of the sea's encroachment, many acres of sandy beach, which were formerly deluged by the surf, have been left high and dry by the retiring of the sea.

Along the whole extent of this portion of the coast, navigation is rendered difficult and dangerous by innumerable shoals and sand-banks, the débris of the friable beach, deposited by the opposite action of the tides and currents of the German Ocean and the British Channel. These banks or shoals are positive quicksands, on which a vessel, once grounded, is almost certain to suffer a speedy and a total wreck. The light sandy particles give rapid way to the action of the water; the keel, which at first scarcely grazes the treacherous surface, quickly sinks deeper and deeper, while the hull of the vessel serves as a barrier or dam to the washed-up sands, which clog around the doomed craft, and insure its destruction. The returning tide seldom has power sufficient to float a vessel left for a few hours tó the insidious action of a sand-bank off the Norfolk or Suffolk coasts. In calm weather, the action of half-a-dozen tides is sufficient to engulf the hull of a good-sized ship; while the chance of a heavy swell from the North Sea, or the recurrence of one of the gusty squalls peculiar to that coast, dooms the grounded vessel to instant destruction.

These enormous beds of sand, many of which are dry at low-water for an extent of several miles, screen the adjacent shores from the furious beatings of the storm-tossed seas; the securest anchorage is to be found in the roadsteads or channels between the sand-banks and the beach. Yarmouth Roads are supposed to present the safest and most capacious shelter for shipping in the world; but the coast is equally eminent for its dangerous navigation: it is the frequent scene of frightful disaster and the loss of life and property.

A knowledge of the various gates, as the pilots term the deep-water passages running amongst the shifting banks, is only to be obtained by constant observation and practice. Many a tall and goodly ship has been lost by the venturous daring of the homeward-bound mariner, who, assailed by the tempests of the northern seas, runs for the shelter of the Yarmouth or Lowestoft Roads, and, presuming upon a partial knowledge of the navigation, incurs the danger he is fleeing to avoid. The pilots bred in the neighbourhood are distinguished by their excellence in navigation, and disregard of danger when called on to display their knowledge of the difficulties of the coast. But their skill is unavailing when a vessel gets fairly aground upon any of the sand-banks, in a heavy sea or gale of wind. The whole of this portion of the coast, from the mouth of the river Orwell to the Wash, is studded with villages and small towns, the inhabitants of which are principally pilots and fishermen, in consequence of the establishment of the coast-blockade having interfered with the more favourite pursuit of smuggling. During the heat of the summer, a few of the provincial gentry flock to various points of the coast for the enjoyment of sea-bathing, but the beach-men count more upon the annual migration of the herrings than the uncertain visitations of fashion. The height of their hopes, however, is a stormy equinox, or a severe and protracted gale, for they consider themselves as visited by the immediate favour of Providence when the neighbouring shore is strewed with wrecks.

A short residence, some years ago, in the borough of Great Yarmouth, afforded me an opportunity of witnessing more than one wreck upon the neighbouring sands, and of gleaning some curious particulars of 'life along shore,' which I here present to my readers, assuring them that nothing is advanced in my relation beyond a mere recital of positive facts.

One Sunday in the month of March, the wind, which had been blowing pretty strongly from the north-west during the day, towards nightfall increased in violence, and roared in fitful gusts, driving a dark rack of clouds across a starlit sky with inconceivable rapidity. At the close of evening-service, as the church-goers were hastening through the streets, the sound of a cannon, fired at short but regular intervals, as a signal of distress, came from seaward, and attracted general attention. In company with three or four of the citizens, I ran towards the Denes, a sandy tract lying between the city and the sea. A few large drops of rain fell from a passing cloud as we hurried on; and the roar of the ground-swell broke upon our ears with unusual force, as soon as we cleared the limits of the town.

A large fire had been lighted on the beach, under the lee of an upturned jolly-boat, as a beacon of hope to the crew of the vessel in distress, and it served us as a guide to the muster-place. In a few minutes, we were standing in the midst of a crowd of pilots, preventive-men, beach-men, and other 'long-shore folk.' The crew of one of the finest yawls on the station were busily employed in hauling their boat through the heavy sand of the beach to the water's-edge. A flash of fire burst from the gloom of the sea; but the report of the gun was lost in the roar of the surf, which broke in tumbling masses on the level shore, and told of the power and violence of the waves.

'What is she, Pete?' inquired an old shipmaster that had accompanied me across the Denes.

'Hard to say,' replied the questioned man, who with a ship's glass had been reconnoitring the vessel in distress.

'Is it the Bremen craft—the bark that was working to the wind'ard this arternoon? She may have put back, fearing a sneezer, and, trying to run into the roads, have struck the tail of the Scroby.'

'Hard to say,' again responded Pete, who, sitting on the bow of the capsized jolly-boat, kept his glass pointed seaward, waiting for the flash of the next gun.

'There was a Scotch smack coming round the pint at nightfall,' advanced a pilot's apprentice.

'She's square-rigged,' said Pete, poking his glass at the stranded craft.

'I seed two 'mophredite brigs and a taupsel schooner a working up outside, jest as I left my craft at sundown, afore this here squall was brewed,' said the captain of a small coaster lying at anchor off the jetty.

'Mayhap it's a collier in ballast?' suggested the shipmaster.

'Hard to say,' responded Pete.

'It doesn't matter the valley of a stale chaw of backer what she is!' exclaimed a huge ferocious-looking wrecker, advancing towards the fire, and throwing down an armful of fuel collected from the neighbouring huts—'it doesn't matter what she is: in an hour, she'll be busted up, and lie in bits all along the shore. Her timbers can't hold again this heavy sea. She's hard and fast on the Scroby; the tide is now half-ebb. Nothing but a merrykill can save her from going to pieces afore the flood.'

'I know'd Heaven wan't agoing to let us starve!' said an under-sized anatomy of a man, in a large hairy cap, which, coming down over his face, joined an enormously big pair of gray whiskers, and looked very much like an exceedingly bushy head of fox-coloured hair. His small face seemed all eyes and mouth; a short black pipe projected from between his lips, and the reflected light of the burning tobacco illumined his thin and yellow face. He was clad in a pea-jacket of many patches; his nether extremities were cased in a pair of leather breeches, which once formed part of the livery of a fashionable footman, and came to their possessor as part of the proceeds of a forgotten wreck. The garment, originally intended to reach the knees of the wearer, extended half-way down the skewer-like legs of the present owner, who rejoiced in the soubriquet of Skinny Jemmy, and was confessedly the most active wrecker on the coast.

'I know'd Heaven warn't agoing to let us starve, Tom,' said he, kicking an unconsumed piece of drift-wreck into the middle of the fire, which flared up with renewed energy. 'When you was all a-croaking 'cause the fishery failed—and it always will fail while them steam-boats is suffered to frighten the herrings off our coast right on to the Dutchman's shore—and the foul weather kept the wisitors from coming to get pickled in the dog-days; and when things was hard, and grub got short, and you fell a-grumbling and blaspheming, all on you, in an ungrateful manner, and talked about seeing your families starve afore your eyes, I put my trust in Providence; and now, who's right? Here's March hardly begun, and here's a blessed good wreck to begin with. The Lord never deserts them what puts their trust in him. I've been a wrecker, now, both man and boy, for better part of fifty year, and am perfectly satisfied of the truth of that 'ere blessed text of Scripture: "The last fish on the griddle brings the first wreck on the beach."'

During the extraordinary recital of Skinny Jemmy's experience, the flash of the gun from the wreck had been twice repeated, and the crew of the yawl stood watching for a lull or pause in the violence of the surf to launch their boat, and proceed to the rescue of the jeopardised seamen. From twelve to fifteen of the finest specimens of humanity stood around and in the boat, awaiting the signal. A cheerful halloo was heard; a young sailor tripped lightly across the beach, and jerked one of the crew from his post, took his place, and excused his rudeness by observing: 'No, no, Jack; brother or no brother, it's my turn now. You've been out in my place three times already, because I've just got spliced. Fair's fair, old fellow; but double duty is too much for any one. I'll go this time, anyhow.'

A deep and heavy wave broke over the bows of the boat, and extended high upon the beach; a short lull followed this extra violence; the word 'go' was uttered; the beach-men strained their toil-strung sinews, and the huge craft floated upon the yeasty waters. Springing rapidly into the boat, each man seized his oar. A few rapid strokes carried them from the beach; and we were absolutely rejoicing that they were safely through the dangers of the surf, when a huge breaker raised the bows of the yawl into a perpendicular attitude, and the height of the succeeding wave turned the boat completely over lengthwise. Three of the crew were unable to reach the shore, although the distance was but a few yards. Amongst the lost hands was the young man who had insisted upon relieving his brother from an extra spell of duty in his place. His body was found shortly afterwards—frightfully disfigured, by the boat falling on him in its descent—and carried to the residence of his newly made bride.

The rescued portion of the boat's crew congregated around the fire, after having hauled their capsised yawl beyond the reach of the waves. Not a syllable was said, but many an anxious look was silently exchanged in the fitful gleams of the firelight; and as each inquiring gaze rested on the well-known lineaments of a comrade, the hand of gratulation was extended, and the severity of the pressure told of the joy at the salvation of a companion and a friend. The sea, as if satisfied with its prey, seemed suddenly to have ceased its violence; the wind, too, changed its roaring into a steady but comparatively noiseless blow; and the next discharge of the signal-gun from the perilled vessel came with unexpected force upon the ears of the group of beach-men who were surrounding the fire. The sound went to their hearts. Without exchanging a word, the men, who had just escaped a violent death, hastened up on the beach, and congregated round a yawl of still larger dimensions than the former, hauled it down into the surf, and watching the fit opportunity, again quitted the shore upon their dangerous employment, amid the hearty cheers of the bystanders, who gave forth their roarings with an energy that overtopped the violence of the gale. My friend the shipmaster, the laconic Pete, and the young sailor's brother, supplied the places of the drowned men.

'Well,' said Skinny Jemmy, as he rubbed his skeleton paws together in the warmth of the flickering flame, 'habit is stronger than mustard; but if I had seen my brother drowned, though I've never had one, still I couldn't have gone out to be upset in the next boat on such a night as this here, as that 'ere Jack Browne has done, with Dick gone home dead to his three-day-old wife. That's the fourth Browne as I've seen drowned out o' that there family. There was Jem Browne, as was dragged overboard in the herring-net; and Tom Browne, as was squashed between the Dutch brig's side and Gorleston Pier; and Bill Browne, as was knocked overboard on a party of pleasure, by the jibing o' the boom o' the *Lady o' the Lake*; and now here's Dick Browne, spifflicated out o' the *Paul Pry*. Four brothers drowned out of five, ain't so bad, as times go; and if Jack Browne gets any more o' the family luck out o' the *Wheel of Fortune*, as he's now gone out in, there's an end to the Brownes.'

The yawl slowly but steadily moved out to sea. The small lantern, with which the adventurous boatmen had provided themselves, glistened in the stern of the boat, and danced merrily along, sometimes buried in the trough of the sea, and again reared on high, as the boat sunk or rose to the action of the waves. Again the awful sound of the minute-gun came dismally across the sea.

'Ay, ay; boom, boom, boom,' said Skinny Jemmy. 'You'd best save your trouble, and not shake your ship to pieces. She'll part timbers soon enough, I warrant. Wonder what she's laded with?—I say, Daddy Sippins, hadn't you not best look arter the body o' your boy Sam? I seed him jump aboard the *Paul Pry* just afore she got turned over, and I ain't seen him since. Take a stick o' lighted wood, old fellow, and walk down the beach. We picked up Dick

Browne just away off here. Your old woman 'ud like her boy popped into the airth, instead of leaving him to the cods and lobsters.'

The old man, thus addressed, had just emerged from the surrounding gloom. Believing that Skinny Jemmy was endeavouring to run a joke upon him, he raised his small gray eyes from the attraction of the fire's glare, and puckered his withered lips into a smile. But the seriousness of the surrounding facts told the truth of the wrecker's statement; the old man cast a glance upon his friends, and knew that he was childless. The big tears drove the smile from his face as he mechanically obeyed Jemmy's suggestion, and picked a flaming brand from the fire, to aid his search along the beach. The captain of the coaster swore a commiserating oath, and snatching another lighted stick, joined the father in his quest. The wind soon put out the flames of the torches; but the men continued their wanderings by the water's edge.

An ominous silence hovered over the fire-circling group; a whisper passed round that the bow-light of the yawl was no more visible, and the ferocious-looking wrecker grinned with delight as he noticed the cessation of the sound of the guns.

'There's room for another dozen o' beach-men,' said Skinny Jemmy; 'we've seen the last o' that boatload. I know'd that Browne's family luck would drown the whole biling on 'em.'

'And the barkey's gone to pieces, or she wouldn't have given up squibbling, if it was only to let the shore-boats know where to find her. I say, Skinny, I'll bet you a bottle o' rum that we've more bodies than bales o' goods.'

The wrecker was interrupted in the delivery of his opinion by the sudden appearance of old Sippins, who rushed amongst the group with his long gray hair sporting in the fierce night-winds, and his eyes almost starting from his head. His violent gestures attracted the general attention; he essayed to speak, but an indistinct muttering came forth, which was lost in the roarings of the wind and the sea. He pointed towards the surf, and seemed to implore our interference. We rushed to the spot, and discovered his companion, the master of the coasting-vessel, hallooing and gesticulating to an object scarcely visible in the white sheet of foam. A huge wave dashed a body upon the sandy beach; the succeeding breaker burst over it with tremendous violence, and the force of the ebb whirled it back into the sea. Again, after a few minutes' pause, the dark object was thrown upon the shore—quick as speech could phrase the idea, the beach-men joined their hands, and encouraged by the old man's cheers, they formed a line, headed by Skinny Jemmy, who snatched the body from the water ere the returning wave had power to engulf its pray.

'Dash my old shoes,' said the wrecker, as he cast a half-drowned Newfoundland dog upon the ground, amidst the boisterous laughter of the crowd, 'there ain't no encouragement to do a wirtuous action nohow. Specting to save a feller-creter's life, I've been swindled by a jiggered bow-wow!'

'Well, Jemmy, boy,' said the ferocious-looking fellow, 'he is well worth the wetting. If the wind arn't washed out of him, he can fetch you many a good prize from the deep water, where there's no boat within hail. A beast as could swim from the Scroby sitch a night as this, could paddle over to Holland on a calm day with a fair wind.'

The dog, which had been panting upon the sand, now rose and crawled towards the fire. It was observed that a rope, fastened to the animal's neck, trailed along the ground, and tended seaward, hiding its continuance in the watery depths. Jemmy eagerly pulled the line ashore, expecting, doubtless, to find a prize at its extremity, but after hauling several fathoms of rope from the surf, a jagged end appeared. The dog had doubtless been forced overboard from the stranded ship, with a rope fastened to his neck, in hopes of establishing a communication with the shore; but the violence of the sea had riven the strands; and the poor animal, with exceeding difficulty, succeeded in making the land.

A low rumbling noise upon the sand attracted our attention; a horse and cart, containing Captain Manby's apparatus for the relief of wrecked vessels, arrived upon the beach; but the distance of the wreck from the shore prevented the operation of the gallant captain's scheme—the efficacy of which, in fitting positions, has been found to be complete. A coil of thin rope is spread upon the beach, attached to a hawser of considerable length and strength; the other end of the rope is fastened to a cannon-ball, which is fired from a mortar with sufficient force and elevation to pass over the ship in distress. The hands aboard are then enabled to haul in the hawser, and form a medium of intercourse with the land. Many a good ship has been saved from destruction, and many a valuable life has been preserved by this simple remedy.

A shout arose from the watchers at the extreme edge of the tumbling surf; a boat dashed past, beyond the influence of the breakers, its white sides glistening in the firelight, and a faint cheer from its crew was borne on the wings of the blast. Captain Manby, who had accompanied his apparatus to the beach, told us that the craft was his life-boat, which had been lying in the harbour's mouth for the purpose of being repaired. Upon hearing the first signal of distress, he had issued orders to his crew; and the noble-hearted old fellow lifted his beaver, and cheered them as they passed on their dangerous errand of humanity.

The violence of the gale and the roaring of the sea had now sensibly abated. Several women, the wives and relatives of the wreckers, joined the group by the fire, and spoke in merry tones of the expected profits of the wreck.

The dog next attracted the attention of the beach-men. He rose from his couchant attitude by the fire, and bending his gaze towards the sea, uttered a low and melancholy whine, which gradually increased in force till it became a confirmed howl of the most dismal tone. Cajoleries, threats, and blows were vainly tried to stop his hideous noise: suddenly bounding from his resting-place, he made towards the boiling surf, and dashing rapidly into the waves, was seen struggling with a human form. A lull of longer duration than usual enabled him to drag his burden within our reach, but he refused to quit his hold till the body was deposited upon the sand by the fireside.

The rescued form was that of a young man of elegant exterior; flowing curls of raven black hair, a small moustache, and the deep olive complexion, told of his foreign birth. The dog licked his hands and face with eager fondness, the women chafed his palms, and Jemmy poured moonshine spirit down his throat; but the destroyer had fastened his grasp around his victim—the eyes rolled, and the breast heaved—the death-rattle sounded in the throat, like the gurgling cry of a drowning man, and the dropping of the jaw, and the glazing of the eye, too surely told that the spirit had departed.

The women, convinced of the futility of their exertions, quitted the senseless corpse; but the dog, unconscious of his loss, nestled closer to the form of his master, and watched the actions of the wreckers with a keen and suspicious eye. A gold chain crossed the breast of the drowned man; a breast-pin glistened in the firelight, and rings of value ornamented the fingers of either hand. Such prizes were not likely to be unnoticed by Skinny Jemmy. With much cunning, therefore, he endeavoured to conciliate the dog, and watching his opportunity, he lifted up the head of the recumbent corpse, and endeavoured to draw off the golden chain. But his greediness cost him dearly; the faithful dog flew at him with a savage fury which it was impossible to resist. The wrecker was tumbled over in the sand, and forced amongst the burning embers of the decaying fire. The bystanders laughed at the distress of their brother-wrecker, but moved not a hand or foot to his rescue. I seized the dog by the throat, and tore him from his grasp. The almost suffocated Jemmy sneaked into the gloom of the surrounding darkness, and the dog returned to his useless watch by the side of his master's corpse.

An officer in the service of the coast-guard, for the prevention of smuggling, now passed our fire, and told us that the yawl had made the beach about a mile below the jetty; that the crew had informed him of the vessel's separation before they could reach her, and of the total loss of her crew.

'And in good time, too, lads,' said the big wrecker: 'the flood is now making, and everything that is not swallowed by the sand, must be ashore afore daylight. If the ebb had lasted an hour longer, not a stick nor a rag would have been left upon our coast.'

'Wonder what she's laded with,' again muttered Skinny Jemmy, as he raked together the smouldering remnants of the fire. 'She must be a foreigner, by the look of that 'ere feller what's been washed ashore. Dash his dog, say I. Not but what Scotch smacks is good things, if there's plenty of passengers, and the luggage is not stowed away in the hold. But them colliers I 'bominates. Coals is not eatables, nor walu-ables, and it takes a long time to get a sackful by picking 'em up piecemeal amongst the sand. Trunks and boxes is convenient, but carpet-bags is a bad inwention. Big Bob, do you remember them 'ere round-topped leather boxes what was washed ashore from the Russian? Didn't they roll along the shore nicely? There ought to be an obligation on all travellers to have such things: it saves trouble so.'

'Get up,' said Big Bob, as Jemmy termed the ferocious-looking wrecker—'get up,' said he, kicking a weather-beaten old woman from her seat by the fire. 'Light your lantern, Moll, and let us mizzle down the beach—everybody else has gone up;' and the wrecker and his companion, journeying the opposite way to Skinny Jemmy, quitted the neighbourhood of the fire.

Scarcely had the suspicion of the destruction of the vessel been confirmed by the preventive officer, ere the main body of the wreckers dispersed themselves along the shore, in eager anticipation of gleaning a harvest from the matters of wreck cast up by the roaring seas. A long line of glittering lights gemmed the shore on either hand far as the eye could reach. The glad shouts of the successful groups, and the imprecations of the disappointed, coming freely on the ear, and mingling strangely with the moanings of the dying storm.

The old beach-man whose son had been lost in the upsetting of the yawl, remained by the fireside, sobbing piteously, and gazing with sympathetic eye upon the body of the master of the dog, which began to exhibit some tokens of appreciating his loss, by whining over the motionless carcass at his side. A loud exulting shout from Skinny Jemmy told of his success. The old man raised his head, and dried his unavailing tears. The shout was repeated; old habits proved unconquerable, and he hastened to join his mates. As I walked home, I heard the old man's voice in high dispute, mixed with frequent oaths and violent objurgations; he was daring another wrecker to the fight for disputing his right to the watch of a drowned sailor whom he had hauled from the sea.

At the suggestion of Captain Manby, we placed the dead body of the dog's master in the cart which brought the apparatus to the shore, and prepared for our return to Yarmouth. The dog did not interfere with our intention; but when the corpse was safely deposited, he jumped into the cart, and crouched down by the cold remains of his only friend.

As we walked slowly homeward, along the sandy paths of the Denes, I could not help ruminating upon the many dangers of all 'who go down to the sea in ships.' 'It were surely better,' thought I, 'to gain a hard and precarious living by gleaning the refuse corn upon another's land, than strive for the golden but dangerous harvest to be gathered by ploughing the surface of the treacherous main.'

FREAKS IN PLANTS.

Who can forget the grand amusement of his boyhood, when first intrusted with the perilous pocket-knife, and allowed to wander on the heath, cutting fern-stalks, and lost in amazement at the King Charles in the Oak, or the Flying Eagle, disclosed by the operation? When the rage was for collecting these things, the sections of trees were often found to present very curious appearances; so curious, indeed, that we find St Pierre—*the* St Pierre of *Paul and Virginia*—in his *Harmonies of Nature*, deeming it 'not impossible that we might find in flowers that correct model of the sun's shape which we have hitherto sought in vain from our telescopes. (!) Why should it be absurd,' he asks, 'to trace in these the lineaments of that luminary, when we find in flowers so many representations of the figures of insects, birds, and of the heads of men and animals?' After this, we may well congratulate ourselves, for the truth's sake, that botany and astronomy are not correlative sciences. Still, as appears from some engravings now before us, the old naturalists must have found in the vegetable world coincidences of form to their hearts' content. Upon several sections of the apple-tree there is a capital Virgin and Child, a mitred ecclesiastic, and some musical instruments. Some fossil ferns, when cut across, present the curious appearance of a number of capital *W*'s arranged round the circumference. The *sigillariæ*, also fossil plants, have their names from being covered with a vast number of impressions like those of a signet. But we hasten to speak of our favourite orchids. The mimicries performed in some of these exquisite flowers are such as almost to exceed belief. In the magnificent conservatories of the Messrs Loddige at Hackney are collected many thousands of these rare exotics. In one wonderful flower, the Chancellor and his Wig are figured forth with surprising exactness. Further on, a sort of flying goblin, with a number of legs and arms, and a fearfully blotched countenance, dangles down in all its terrors before our eyes. We are next startled by a *catasetum*, looking like some of the horrid anomalous monsters, which are all very well in oil or engraving, but are clearly contrary to all rules of natural history. Here expands a Venus's slipper, as if Cinderella had been to a ball among the flowers, and dropped her wonderful shoe upon its branches; only no prince picks up and makes a stir about the lost article, the vegetable shoe. There is the swan orchid—the *cycnochus*—a wonderful plant, in which it needs no painter's imagination to detect, at a glance, the most curious resemblance to the proud bird whose name has been applied to it—its well-formed body and wings, its delicate, long, twice-recurved neck, rather swollen at its extremity for the head, all of a spotless white. Beyond, a livid old gentleman's half-countenance confronts us; and, pulling down the lower jaw, we behold a mouth without a tongue, and an attempt at a throat behind. Of all the monstrous creations in this flower-world, this is the greatest and most perplexing.

The excitable imagination of Dr Darwin ran wild upon these coincidences, and he paints in colours of a brightness peculiarly his own, the appearance of the American spider orchid. Truly, it is a remarkable flower—a great brown spider mimicked to the life, squatting at the entrance of its vegetable den, and scaring away all intruders by its menacing aspect. Then there is a multitude of resemblances to other objects, not less striking, but more common. Our British orchids, the bee and fly orchids, are familiar instances. 'In the genera *Oberonia* and *Drymodia*,' says Dr Lindley, 'Pythagoras would have found a living evidence of animals transmuted into plants.' One of the flowers belonging to the former species is called *Anthropophora*, the man-orchis. If there are fairies in the floral world, here is Oberon himself. Lizards, toads, and insects appear to have sat to the painter and modeller in the formation of many other orchids; and ladies will be astonished to learn that one impertinent flower is a complete pair of stays in miniature. Another, called after its original, displays the most unmistakable similarity to a human thorax, even in minute particulars. A small chaste-looking flower at Loddige's, has the face of a little fairy. It seems a thousand pities Ovid was no botanist: could he have fallen in with half a dozen such instances as we have recorded, what a heap of elegant fabrication would have been added to his *Metamorphoses!*

Not to prolong our extracts from one tribe alone, let us turn to others. The mandrake, when stripped of its leaves, has occasionally a rude resemblance to the human form. The description of Langhorne will convey the most lively idea of its appearance:

> Mark how that rooted mandrake wears
> His human feet, his human hands;
> Oft as his shapely form he rears,
> Aghast the frighted ploughman stands.

The old man cactus (*Cactus senilis*) is about as odd a plant as any in our list. Reaching a height of eight or ten feet, he is often seen in his native place, his long white hair flowing to his feet, spending a peaceful existence, and attaining a *green* old age in spite of the early streaks of gray which appear on his head. It was long a fable that the Tatarian forests abounded in vegetable lambs. They were tolerably well formed, had four, or *nine* legs, a head, and a tail, and were clothed in golden wool. If there was any truth in the account at all, it was due to the alleged occasional resemblance of a hairy fern to such creatures. The name of the fern was the *Polypodium barometz*, or *baranetz*—such, at least, is Sir Hans Sloane's account. An equally curious resemblance, about which there is no mistake, is the Chinese finger-fruit, the *Citrus sacodactylus*, 'the hand of Fo.' There were some good casts of this curiosity some years ago at the Chinese Collection in Hyde Park: the fat and shapely contour, the delicate fingers and thumb being very strikingly exhibited. The Chinese have a fruit, also, which they call the *lung yen*, or dragon's eye, and which bears a very curious resemblance to an eye-ball 'gouged' out of its socket. The root of the bamboo is particularly prolific in wooden monstrosities, which resemble some things in nature, and suggest others which the world never saw. Taking advantage of this disposition, our skilful friends of the Flowery Land, who are passionately fond of these curiosities, soon make, with the aid of a few carving tools, the root assume a respectable figure, and we are presented with a grim-looking old gentleman, wearing a frizzly beard of root-fibres, dressed in apparel of the same, and looking at one with that excessively terrible jocosity of countenance which was once, and may be still, for what we know, so much in vogue. Sometimes the old gentleman has a wife and one or two children, united together in bonds somewhat more material than those of family love. 'Dragons and gorgons, and chimeras dire,' form the appropriate pediment to these sculptures. The *Broussonetta papyrifera* of Japan and India, from which India-paper is manufactured, has leaves which contain a yet more strange mimicry. Each of them appears as if one had rent a piece out of it, and as if it had been afterwards darned up again. That blushing production the love-apple, the tomato of epicures, sometimes commits some imitative freaks; occasionally it breaks out into roseate fingers, and now and then it has the form of a pair of chubby hands folded together.

Our green-houses and flower-gardens will supply us with a multitude of mimicries, in which the resemblance has been the origin of the title. That of the common cock's-comb, the long enduring ornament of our stifled city-windows, is a very homely example to adduce, but as striking as many more rare. The calceolarias are flower-slippers; the sweet-pea, a butterfly; the campanulas, bells; the asters, stars; while the heart's-ease, the columbine, the Turk's-cap, and a host of others, overpower our pen, and bid us leave the list to every one to complete; and that will prove a longer task than may have been supposed.

KATIE CHALLONER.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

Katie Challoner was a very young creature when I was first introduced to her, a little toddling thing of not quite a twelvemonth old. Her one great ambition seemed to be to get into her father's arms, and after nestling there a moment or two, to struggle down on to her feet, and with one of his fingers in each of her fat, dumpy hands, to go roaming about the room, uttering little inarticulate cries of pleasure. And he—the reserved, silent, constrained, unimpressionable man, as he was held—was as devoted to his little daughter as she to him; and, hard wrought as he often was with his Sunday duties, or his pastoral peregrinations, in a parish that seemed to be trying into how many far-off corners it could contrive to squeeze itself, he would still forget his weary back and stiff limbs, to stoop over her as she tottered about, and drink in, with suffused eye, the little looks of love she would cast up at him, as she felt his gentle hand.

George Challoner and I had been neighbours for some time, and friends much longer. Very shortly after his marriage, he had been presented to the vicarage of Moreton, and almost from the day of his coming into residence, our old habits of intimacy had been resumed. Four children were born to him in the first six years of his married life, but two only had survived the first few weeks of life, and one of those two was very delicate. Three years later, little Katie was born.

I was compelled to be absent from my home at this period, and for many months subsequently; but in his letters, my friend told me how he was affected by this new addition made to his family. 'I did not know,' he said, 'that I *could* love an infant as I love this little girl.'

The elder of his two surviving boys was in many respects a remarkably fine lad; but the promise of strength indicated in his infancy and early childhood was not realised as he became older; and before Katie grew to be ten years old, she and her brother Jamie alone were left to their parents.

Jamie, though delicate, and almost weakly, from the first, had yet passed through all the perils which beset the earlier stages of child-life, and was now a remarkably thoughtful and studious boy; so much so, indeed, that his parents looked on with somewhat painful admiration at the efforts of his vivid intellect; at times, perhaps, in still more painful anticipation that the frail body might prove to be unequally yoked with such a striving mind. Katie, at ten years old, was a well-grown girl of her age; tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed, loving, and engaging. Her attachment to her father, and his to her, had sustained no alteration as she grew older and taller, save that of corresponding growth. She clung to him until she was able to walk, and then would never have left him with her own consent; her hand stole up to his, whether indoors or abroad; his name was the first word she learned to pronounce; she started when she heard his step or the tones of his voice, and, without a moment's pause, left every one and everything, even her food, to go to him. She was his constant companion in his spare half-hours; walked with him, or rode upon his shoulder as he went about the roads or footpaths nearer home; sat on her little stool at his feet in his study, quiet and content, as if it was happiness only to be near him; began early to be his ministering spirit in all home-wants and habits; and in two words, was as necessary to him as he was to her. To her mother, too, she was not only, to her little utmost, always and diligently helpful, but loving and affectionate in no ordinary degree.

Two or three short years passed away, and Katie was the only child left to Mr and Mrs Challoner. After almost startling those who knew him well enough to judge of his intellectual powers, by the brilliancy of his attainments, Jamie died; and his light, like that of the sudden meteor which flashes across the placid sky and is lost in a moment's space, was no more seen.

His father and mother had foreseen his fate for months, nay, for years; but still their sorrow was none the less real and penetrating. Katie now never left her father when it was possible for her to be with him, nor would he have willingly borne her absence. She seemed instinctively to know his thoughts, and feelings, and wishes as they rose; and often, as the silent, self-contained man struggled with his grief, she would rise softly and stand by him, clasping his arm close to her side with her own, nestling her face to his shoulder, and putting her spare hand into his, as she had used to do in the simple love of her infancy. She spoke no word; but he understood the appeal, and accepted the comfort; and they two grew together more every day.

Another claim was now to be made upon her ministering offices. Her mother, never very strong, had felt her son's loss acutely; and this, together with the constraint she had imposed upon herself, that she might not add to her husband's sorrow by suffering her own to appear too vividly, had taxed her strength beyond its powers. When the excitement, which had given her unnatural strength as long as Mr Challoner's grief was still fresh and strong, began to be withdrawn by the gradual recovery of his wonted self-command, she began to fail from day to day. The thought of bodily motion became oppressive, and her one desire was to be kept quiet, to be at rest. It was the same with her mind also. She could neither read nor think. True, she suffered no pain; but neither did she enjoy any pleasure, save only that which originated in the simple presence of her husband and her daughter.

Katie now was altogether invaluable. I believe her remarkable instinctive perceptions of what would most conduce to the comfort of the poor invalid, were the means not only of making her mother's mournful condition as little distressing as it could be, but, under God, of rendering the continuance of life possible.

A slow, weary, anxious winter and spring were passed, with no decisive improvement. It was something that there was no decided change for the worse. The sea-side was recommended, and it was decided to take the sufferer to her native place, Cliffborough, for some months. The result surpassed all expectation, and even hope; but a lengthened and severe winter again undermined her only partially recovered strength, and before its snows were past, it became evident that those of another winter would mantle her grave.

She died, and Katie now was become her father's earthly all in all. I fear I cannot well describe what she was at this time. Still a mere girl in age and in form, she was a woman in expression, in thought, in feeling. All her friends, when with her, felt as if years of life-experiences had been concentrated in the sorrows she had known, and the duties they had entailed on her. To and with her father alone was she still a girl. With him she seemed the same loving, clinging, depending, artless being she had been when a very little child. Always loving and kind; with a nature that knew none of the harsher emotions; prone to ready pity; restless until distress or suffering, wherever she heard of it, had been succoured or alleviated; and early made aware, as if by instinct, that she had a strong power of consolation bestowed upon her, she had grown by the time she was seventeen to be not simply unselfish—that is saying too little—but almost incapable of originating a thought in which her own gratification was the leading idea. Her one great object in existence was her father; and yet, inconsistent as it may seem, the exclusiveness of this object had no effect in rendering her less thoughtful or careful for others than she had always been. Her sweet, gentle, obliging ways made her very dear to all her girlish companions; while among the children of the neighbourhood she was absolutely idolised. If there was a sorrow or a difficulty among them, Katie Challoner was the universal comforter and succourer. If there was something to be done which only a clever hand and a kind heart could accomplish, it was Katie Challoner's hand and heart that were instantly appealed to. A children's party without Katie was no party, and a Christmas-tree that she had no hand in, by that one deficiency lost half its attractions. No one was jealous of her, or feared her, or doubted her; no one did anything but love her; and she deserved all she got, and more.

So passed three years, with much change to her in one way, but very little in any other. She grew into a woman, and a very lovely woman. You almost wondered to see her so lovely, after looking at her a while. Her features were not very regular, nor, quite all of them, very good; but her hair was beautiful, her eyes very beautiful, her mouth beautiful, her complexion perfect, and the expression—it was in that her chief charm lay—the expression of a guileless, noble, earnest, loving nature, looking out of the whole countenance, and finding unsought confirmation in every word and gesture.

Her grief at her mother's death had been, though heartfelt and sincere, much mitigated by a perception of the duties towards her father. She was too much preoccupied with the instinctive effort to be a comfort to him, and the more so now she was his only one on earth. But in the very degree in which this was so, would her grief and distress at her father's death be aggravated and enhanced. And so it was; he was taken ill, and in four days lay dead. The last day which saw him alive, saw him conscious; and as Katie's hand lay in its old-accustomed place in his, now too weak to press it, he told her, in faint and faltering words, what she had been to him, how she had alleviated his sorrow, and been his comfort and his joy; and then he spoke of their glad reunion with all their dear ones, with no fear of parting more to embitter its gladness. A few minutes more, and she felt his hand close on hers, as it had never done before since his illness came on. But the grasp relaxed—grew fainter—ceased. Her father was dead, and she insensible. Her youth and strength seemed to wither away, under her bereavement, like grass before the pursuing flame. She was on the verge of the grave for nearly three weeks, and then rallied very slowly and flickeringly. At length life and youth asserted their right to prevail, and she was again well enough to be moved. It was decided that she should embrace the offer made by her maternal aunt, Miss Woodville, of a home with her at Cliffborough. This lady was a confirmed invalid, and quite unable to leave the house. But she was most excellent and amiable, and all Katie's sincerest well-wishers agreed in thinking no other plan half so good could have been devised for her. And so, a short time after, she removed to Cliffborough, and took up her abode with Miss Woodville.

The physical effect of change of air and change of scene was almost marvellous. After a few days only, her limbs recovered their roundness, her step its lightness, and her eye something of its former brightness. But a heavy gloom still hung over her at times, which no efforts of her own, no sympathy or kindness of her aunt's, could dispel or materially lessen. The one object of her life had been snatched from her pursuit, and the world and all in it, even life itself, were, as yet, one cheerless blank to her.

In a short time this depressing gloom began to give way before a silent and unobtrusive influence. She had long known her aunt as a hopeless invalid; but she had not known that she was liable to a perpetual recurrence of fits of terrible pain, followed by some hours of distressing languor, and that scarcely a week passed without at least one of these seizures. She arrived at this knowledge accidentally. She had gone into her aunt's room, one day, about six or seven weeks after her arrival, to ask for some instructions as to some work she had undertaken, and, just as she entered, Miss Woodville was in a paroxysm of fearful pain. Katie was terribly alarmed; she thought her aunt was dying; and it was only after repeated assurances that it was nothing unusual, and was passing off, that she was reassured. Then the thought entered her mind that she had for weeks been receiving all that the kindest, most thoughtful care and sympathy could dictate, at the hands of one who sorely needed such offices to be rendered to herself—whose need at times, indeed, was excessive. She felt rebuked by her aunt's patient and silent fortitude under the weight of such a cross, and ashamed at thinking that she had been the recipient, instead of rendering the services of sympathy and affection. Then she thought, may I not be a help, a comfort, and a support to another dear one? and thus she found what she herself needed, in the efforts this resolution incited her to make. She had again found an object, and it was health and peace to her mind and heart. She became more lovely than ever, and the permanent impress left upon her features by her terrible conflict with grief, only served to refine and elevate the character of her loveliness.

Miss Woodville was unable, as I have intimated, to go out into the world of Cliffborough society; but still she was known and appreciated by many, and on days when she was well enough to receive visitors, her drawing-room, from one o'clock until three, was rarely without visitors; in this way Katie formed acquaintances, and soon began to be held in the same estimation at Cliffborough that she had enjoyed in Moreton. Among the most regular of Miss Woodville's visitors was a Mr Fountayne, a wealthy merchant and influential townsman of Cliffborough. Report said that, twenty years before, he had been her affianced lover; that her ill health had commenced about that time; and that, on her being assured, after months of illness, by her medical attendants, that there was no earthly prospect of restoration to health, although her life might be continued for many years, she had refused to clog him with such a burden. It was long before he could be induced by her to take the same view of the case; but at length he did, and for a period of several years was absent from Cliffborough, engaged, as it was understood, in the personal supervision of some branch of the foreign business of the firm he was connected with, and which, it was believed, was greatly benefited by his presence and activity. He had then returned to England, and resumed his former functions and abode; and his intimacy with Miss Woodville had been revived, and ever since continued to be marked by the most entire confidence in, and affectionate regard for each other.

Katie had often heard of Mr Fountayne before she came to live in Cliffborough, and had seen him on more than one occasion; her recollections represented him as a rather elderly-looking gentleman, very kind-hearted, but with a little abruptness or *brusquerie* of manners, which rather startled her sometimes. But the kind-heartedness had impressed her much more deeply and abidingly than the roughness; for she had seen the former in perpetual flow towards one of the most frequent companions—playfellows they could hardly be called—of her brother Jamie. This was Frank Fountayne, a nephew of the gentleman we are speaking of, almost as delicate a lad as poor Jamie; and though not, like him, devoted to study, yet very fond of quiet sedentary pursuits, very ingenious in the construction of toys and quaint knick-knacks, and with a singular facility for clever wood-carving with his knife. The two little weakly-looking boys were great friends, and much together; and thus Katie had not only learned to look upon the nephew as a second delicate brother—while he certainly loved her as much as if she had been his sister—but had also learned to love the uncle, whose occasional visits to Frank's widowed mother were always marked by peculiar kindness. Only a few weeks before Jamie sickened with his fatal illness, Frank's mother had died, and he had been removed from Moreton by his uncle, having taken most loving leave of poor Jamie and 'his own darling little sister,' as he called Katie.

During her mother's prolonged sojourn at Cliffborough, Katie had seen Frank more than once. The delicate sapling of a boy had grown into a tall and by no means robust youth, much too shy to attempt more than a short and somewhat faltering reference to former days. He was at this time in the office of a branch of his uncle's firm, established in the county town, and was declared to be doing exceedingly well there.

It may have been some four or five months after Katie's domestication at her aunt's, that Mr Fountayne called one morning, but not, as usually, alone. Katie, at first, did not in the least recognise the tall, handsome, well-made, whiskered young man who accompanied him; and truth to tell, although he knew very well who the young lady he saw in that drawing-room must certainly be, he was by no means prepared to recognise in the lovely girl before him her whom, eight or ten years ago, he had called 'his own darling little sister.'

Leaving the young people to renew their acquaintance as they best might, Mr Fountayne proceeded to tell his old friend that the firm had sanctioned the plans, which he had already more than once mentioned to her as originating with himself, for Frank's advancement; and that, in consequence, his nephew—a little turned of twenty-one—was installed in a somewhat confidential and important position in the office at Cliffborough: while—Mr Fountayne went on to add—if he continued to conduct himself as well for the next few years as he had done for the last four or five, his fortune might fairly be looked upon as made. Miss Woodville congratulated the young man, who was by no means a stranger in her house, very warmly; and as her visitors rose to go, said to him: 'Frank, you must come and spend an evening with your old friends sometimes. You will always be welcome.'

And so Frank became a regular visitor at Miss Woodville's; and his presence at her tea-table seemed to be equally acceptable to all the parties concerned. His intercourse with Katie, after the constraint of their first meeting wore off, seemed to become as kindly, and almost as familiar, as when they used to call one another brother and sister: there was that peculiar character about it which nothing seems to give but old and friendly acquaintanceship. They might have been brother and sister, for aught a stranger could see. They seemed to have no reserve towards each other, and quite as little—at least as regarded their mutual friendship and acquaintance—towards any third person.

Somewhere about this time, a picnic—and the Cliffborough world was famous for its picnics—was organised to take place in some glorious woods at about three miles' distance from the town. Every body raved about the picturesque beauty of the Red Brow Woods; and Katie, who had never yet found heart to mingle in the general society of the place, allowed herself to be induced to join the party. Frank, who was an eligible for every party, of course made one also. Horses, ponies, and even donkeys, were in requisition to convey the numerous party to their destination; and Katie, who had often ridden when living at Moreton, found herself again in the saddle, and mounted on a pony which was not quite so quiet as some of the others. In ascending a rather steep and somewhat narrow path, which led to the small embowered platform where the provisions were to be set out, her pony took offence at a patient donkey which was jogging along very leisurely just in front, and began curveting on two legs, and otherwise conducting itself in a disagreeably eccentric way. Katie was a good horsewoman, and rode without fear, and she sought gently to soothe her palfrey, and induce him to proceed more soberly and quietly. However, a more irregular caper than any that had preceded it, brought the animal into such a position on the very verge of a precipitous bank, some twelve or fifteen feet high, that one foot now suspended in the air would, when brought down, find no resting-place, and then a fearful fall for both rider and steed must ensue. Frank, who, on observing the pony's restiveness, had hurried up from a party of ladies he had been walking with, a little in the rear, fortunately not only saw the danger, and the only means by which it might be anticipated, but was near enough to act with the decision that alone could have availed. Rushing impetuously forward, he clasped her firmly with his right arm, at the very instant the pony lost its footing, and tottered over—catching a sapling-tree with his other arm as he did so—and fairly held her suspended for a moment, as the animal fell from under her. He was unable, however, to prevent himself from being borne down and over the edge of the bank by her weight; and it was not without difficulty, and the exertion of great strength, that he succeeded in arresting their downward tendency, obtaining foothold, and eventually raising her quite unhurt, though a little shaken. As he did so, his countenance, deadly pale, the expression of his eye, and his low, faltering, intensely earnest, 'Thank God, Katie, you are saved!' disclosed a secret which even she hitherto had scarcely ventured to suspect; and he saw that it had done so.

There was no great harm done, and the picnic passed off much as all such parties, in fine weather, usually do.

As the party dispersed after luncheon, Katie found herself near enough to Frank to utter a few hurried words of acknowledgment, which she remembered, with some degree of self-accusation, she had not so much as attempted to do before, and added an anxious inquiry if he really was not at all hurt. After this, until their return to Cliffborough, rather late in the evening, they scarcely met again, and when they did, it was but to wish each other good-night.

On the following day, Frank looked in for five minutes at Miss Woodville's to inquire after Katie, and to ask if he might come in, in the evening. He did so, and took the opportunity of Miss Woodville's being summoned away for a few minutes, to come to the point at once, though not with a very steady voice.

'Oh, Katie!' he said, 'I cannot tell you what I felt yesterday when I saw you in such danger. It made me forget in a moment all my long-fixed purposes. I hardly know what I said, but I am sure I ought—— I mean to say I can't help saying a little more, if you will let me.' And then he went on more connectedly, and told her that he believed he had always loved her. He had never forgotten her all the years they had been separate; and when he had seen her those two or three times a few years since, he found he had the same tender affection for her as when he used to call her his darling little sister, and which he had never felt for any one else; and now, from the time he had come to live at Cliffborough, he had known that he loved her as he could love no other; but he had not dared to say so, hardly even to himself. She was rich as compared to him; he had nothing but his salary, and his hopes, and his steadfast purpose to do his duty and make his way, if he could. But if he should prosper, as his uncle augured that he would, then, after a few years, he *had* hoped he might have come to her and told her all he felt for her, all he dared to aspire to. 'Oh, Katie!' he said, coming closer to her as she stood by the fireplace, and taking her hand, which she did not make any haste to withdraw, 'with that hope to encourage me, I should find courage, and determination, and endurance for anything. But I must not ask you to let me entertain it without first telling you something else, very painful to me. My uncle holds me in some suspicion at the present time, and I have nothing but my own word to clear me. Mr Turner has told him that he saw me, late one night about a week ago, going into a house which has a very bad reputation, as being the scene of much low gambling and other evil things. That very night, I had been at my Cousin Stonor's lodgings until a late hour, and when my uncle asked Stonor about it, he replied that I had gone to sleep at his rooms, that he had left me in that condition about half-past nine, and when he returned, about eleven, had found me awake, but very excited. Mr Turner, I ought to have said, had not seen the face of the person he had noticed, but said he had no sort of doubt at the time that it was I.'

'But it was not you, Frank?' interposed Katie.

'O no—indeed, it was not. But my uncle, who is so immovable in his opinions and belief, when once formed, will only say he hopes it was not. I was very strangely affected that night. I had had a glass of wine and water with Stonor—he wanted me to have brandy and water, but I never touch it—and a few minutes after, I felt a strange sort of drowsiness come over me; I remembered no more until the clock struck ten: that I heard distinctly. Then I had the strangest impressions, like those of a nightmare, only with more of the sensation of being awake all the time: it was like being delirious and knowing quite well that I was so. Even after I got home—and Stonor had to take me there in a cab—this continued, though less painfully, through most of the night; and I felt very poorly in the morning. My uncle noticed it at once, and fancied, at least I thought so, that I had been tipsy overnight. I never felt anything like it but once before, and that was when I broke my thigh, and the doctor gave me a very strong opiate, which did anything but send me to sleep; together with the pain, it almost drove me mad. I thought I ought to tell you all this, Katie, before I asked you if I might hope, and in that hope go to my work in the world; or whether I must never think of you any more, and bear—— Oh, Katie, what will you say to me?'

Katie said nothing for a moment or two, which seemed a long time to him; and then she looked up into his face, and he saw something in hers which gave him courage to come very near her, quite near enough to hear her low-toned, half-faltering, half-playful reply: 'Indeed, Frank, I should not like you never to think of me any more.'

We need not describe his reception of her reply, nor the remainder of the interview; indeed, there would be very little to describe, for Miss Woodville returned to the room almost immediately after Katie had given him her answer.

'You must tell my aunt,' had been her last injunction to Frank as the door opened to admit the elder lady; and Frank certainly did not shew any disobedience to his liege-lady's first behest.

'Oh, Miss Woodville,' he cried, rushing up to her and almost carrying her to her sofa. 'I am so happy.'

And certainly, as the dear old lady listened to his tale, she did not seem to be rendered at all otherwise herself. At the council of three, which now was held, it was decided to inform Mr Fountayne of the state of affairs, without loss of time; and further, that Frank was not to suffer his uncle's suspicions to be a great trouble, as the matter was sure to be cleared up some day.

At an unusually early hour the next morning, Mr Fountayne was announced.

'My dear young lady,' he began, as soon as he saw Katie, 'my nephew has been telling me what took place between you last evening. I need not say how glad I should be, on his account, if ever this should be; but you must not act hastily. Both for his sake and your own, I say this. He lies under some suspicion with me at present, as to two circumstances.'

Katie here interrupted her visitor, to state that Frank had told her so himself.

Mr Fountayne resumed: 'Well, so much the better. It looks honest, at all events. Still, I can't hold him cleared. Mr Turner is a very cautious, as well as observant man, and he says he was convinced at the time that it was Frank he saw. Moreover, Stonor's testimony—though I have good reason to doubt and dislike Stonor very deeply—is, to say the least of it, strange. Besides, there was Frank's condition the next morning. My dear young lady, I do not like the look of the business. I have always been afraid for Frank in these very particulars. His poor father ruined himself by play, and killed himself by drink; and it's the same blood—the same blood.'

'IN MEMORIAM'—CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

All day across the purple heath
Fell ceaseless lines of wintry rain,
And all the valley-town beneath
Was mist-hid save the belfry vane.

It rained until the mirk came down
An hour before its wonted time,
And gleams of light crept through the town,
Which flickered out ere midnight chime.

Across the casement yet a-light,
A shadow, like a pulse-beat, passed
Out from the fire-light to the night,
As 'twere the house-heart throbbing fast.

Ah! shadow lone! you paused the while
A wan face peered into the gloom,
And turning with a weary smile,
Resumed its pacing through the room.

I wot she never saw the night,
Or heard the plashing of the rain,
As clasped within her fingers white,
Her fevered forehead pressed the pane!

She only saw those shadowy lands
A gleam of fire-light might dispel,
And shew between the clasping hands
The silent room she knew so well.

She sits 'mid fern-leaves, autumn brown,
With Emily's soft hand in hers—
So still and mute, the lark drops down
Unheeding past them to the furze.

Rapt in high thoughts, they never hear
The mastiff, whining restlessly,
Or see the late flowers of the year
Lie dim and fading on their knee.

Scare not the dream from out the room,
O wailing wind! O plashing rain!
The churchyard lies in eery gloom
Without the storm-beat window-pane.

Oh! call not back the bitter year
Which first the sister-band dissolved;
When, stern of face, without a tear,
She passed—reluctant, yet resolved!

O panting soul! which vainly strove
To stay awhile thy spirit-flight—
Art thou near her whose sister-love
Yearns unto thee this wintry night?

Art thou, too, here? thou other one,
With whom she sate beside the sea,
And watched its waves flash in the sun,
With cheek to cheek pressed tenderly.

Upon the hearth, O dying gleam,
Flame steadily, nor break the spell
Which makes the past the present seem,
And veils the moment of farewell!

A halcyon sunlit time of love
Is coming to you, lonely heart!
And you shall prize it, though it prove
A bitter-sweet, ere you depart!

To pass away 'twere easier sooth!
In the dark silence of to-night,
Than watch the husband of your youth
Grow dimmer in your dying sight.

The bells which blithely chimed to-night,
Another Easter-eve will toll—
For in this chamber, mute and white,
Shall lie the casket of your soul;

While o'er the land, whoe'er has known
The glowing words thy hand hath penned,
Shall name thee in a softer tone,
And feel as they had lost a friend. R.

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DR SIRINGEM, Q.C.K.

As in the political world there are some persons who are always in opposition, and continuously sympathetic with the powers that be *not*, so in matters physical there is a considerable minority to whom commonly recognised authorities are equally abhorrent. A man whose nature is Conservative should be cautious how he once transgresses in any of these revolutionary directions; for not only is retreat found to be impossible, but further unorthodox advance seems to become imperative. A gentleman cannot take the Pills of Methuselah, night and morning, with the intention of protracting life, and dying with a white beard forty inches long, for any considerable period, with impunity to what remains within him of common sense. Finding himself alive, and with his beard growing, his respect for the Faculty will diminish, and his desires for Patent Medicines increase and multiply. When his eyes get dull, he will patronise *Winkin's Efficacious Puff Ball* instead of spectacles; when his legs begin to totter, he will support them with *Walker's Powders for strengthening the Bones*, instead of a stick; and he will make his bald head shine with *Noddle's Revigorator*, with the idea that, after a week or two, it will save him the cost of a wig.

Similarly, a Teetotaller runs a considerable risk of becoming a Total-abstinence man, and a Total-abstinence man of sinking into a Vegetarian—that is to say, down to the level of the beasts that perish for the use and benefit of the great mass of his fellow-countrymen. It may be also added, that, in religious matters, from being a Jumper to becoming a Mormon is not many jumps; and in literary concerns, that one who, upon principle, spells Bill with one l, must soon become a convert to the Phonetic system. Our business just at present, however, is only with the Medically Unorthodox; with those who believe in no curative science that is not advertised on blank walls and in newspapers, and who demand nothing of a practitioner, except the one proviso that he shall *not* be a recognised M.D.

Unknown to the College of Surgeons and Physicians, though not by any means to Fame, there are numberless heaven-born professors of the Healing Art in every populated portion of this happy country; whose cures, if not always lasting, are very speedy, and if not always cheap, are at least miraculous. Those whose mission is exclusively directed to the poorer classes, make no pretensions to Science whatsoever, but rather glory in their state of nature and primeval ignorance. They have 'gifts' instead, and 'faculties' and 'powers,' and are generally found to lodge over the shops of very small green-grocers. Perhaps they do this for the sake of the simples—that is, the vegetable simples—thus ready to their hand; but, at all events, they are peculiarly parasitical to that profession; and, on the other hand, the small green-grocer doubtless makes some kind of Profit out of his wise man. They dwell, and even emigrate together, when occasion demands, as the following advertisement, culled out of yesterday's newspaper, from a considerable assortment of such intimations, will testify:

TO THE AFFLICTED.

Removed with Mr Mellon, green-grocer, from No. 9 to No. 40 Arbour Court, Finsbury,

RICHARD HIGGINS,

who still continues to treat the following diseases with success: Rheumatisms and Sprains—within 7 days; Rose—within 2 days; Ringworm—within 4 days. Lupus Exedens, which baffles the medical Faculty—*certain*. All Skin Diseases—*certain*. Rough Skins very soon made smooth.

The punctuality, as well as rapidity, of Mr Higgins's cures, without doubt surpasses the effects of ordinary treatment, while the somewhat elliptical addition of the word 'certain,' betokens a confidence which is rarely commanded by mere professionals.

Besides these Blessings to poor neighbourhoods, however, there is another class of benevolent persons who administer relief to suffering brethren of a higher social position. Being actuated by motives considerably above suspicion, they are far from blushing to find the good they accomplish, Fame; indeed—since their expenses are generally confined to the hire of a Front Door with a brass plate upon it—their principal outlay may be said, like that of the Physician so well known to us, whose 'sands of life' have been running out any time these fifteen years, to consist 'in communicating to others, through the medium of the press, the news of the inestimable advantages they have to confer;' in other words, they advertise very largely. These gentlemen by no means disclaim the title of 'Doctor,' and their titles have not seldom quite a kite-like appearance from 'a following' of some twelve or fifteen letters of the alphabet. They are usually corresponding members of the Chirurgical Societies of Teheran and Archangel, and have been sometime principal physicians at the courts of Donner-Blitzen or Offsubierswigg.

Although it has been (maliciously and libellously) stated that they lead a large portion of the British Public by the nose, this is not the literal fact.

It is the Ear, in preference to any other organ, by which they prefer to take it. That is found to be the most conveniently held—if the longer, the better—and to afford altogether the most advantageous subject for the Irregular Practitioner. There are few persons, in any populous and commercial town, who are not afflicted, at one time or another, with 'singing in the ears.' For that complaint, you are therefore adjured, while there is yet time, to consult, at his professional residence (dimly suggesting a private one in Grosvenor Square), the celebrated aurist, Dr Siringem, Q.C.K., and C.H.R.L.T.N. Again, if you are so unfortunate as *not* to have singing in your ears, what charms has music left for you? If music has no charms, the poet has informed us in what a savage condition must our feelings be. A beneficent advertisement, headed, with a delicate indirectness, *Concerts*, will in this case also suggest your immediate application to Dr Siringem. No trumpet, it says, will assist you, or find a response in the drum of your ear, without his aid. The whisper of Love, the prattle of affectionate Childhood, the fine bass tones of Friendship, now all as nothing, by reason of your unresponsive tympanum, will be restored to you by his means alone. 'Doctor S. may, without vanity—and humbly acknowledging that he is (metaphorically speaking) but an instrument—appropriate to himself the faculty of restoring life, since he thus restores with certainty all that makes life endurable. No. 99 Gongoose Street, Blackfriars. Hours of attendance, from 9 A. M. to 9 P. M.'

My Uncle Sandars, who is always giving his adhesion to Grand Novel Discoveries in Science, and who, I most devoutly trust, will be able to confine his aberrations to maltreatment of his own system, and not suffer it to affect his present testamentary intentions with regard to others, was for a period which, but for me, might have been unlimited, an esteemed patient of Dr Siringem's. The learned professor's mode of treatment was so original as to deserve, if upon that ground only, public acknowledgment; and as I see he is still courting the attention of the World at large, I will assist him, by giving a fuller account of the benefits which he proposes to confer upon it, than a mere advertisement can offer. My uncle had been taking the Manna of Mephibosheth—a sovereign remedy for deafness—perseveringly for several years, without getting perceptibly less hard of hearing; but he was very far from confessing to that failure. He even affirmed that he felt 'a softening' at times—which must have been, if anywhere, in his brain—and 'a sort of a feeling as if he was *going* to hear;' so that I was rather astonished when calling upon him on a certain day to find that he had left off the Manna, and confessed himself the better for so doing.

'I am sincerely glad to hear it,' said I; 'and I do hope you will no longer permit your too trusting nature to be imposed upon by pretenders to science.' He was my uncle, and my only one, so I could not say 'fooled by quacks.'

'What the deuce do you mean, sir?' replied he angrily. 'Of course, I shan't. I'm the last man in the world to be taken in by anything of the sort.'

'Goodness gracious!' exclaimed I, suddenly perceiving a very extraordinary change in the appearance of my relative, 'what *have* you been doing with your ears and the back of the neck?'

'Nothing,' said he, but rather tremulously. 'They're only a little red—are they?'

'Red!' cried I. 'Redder than beet-root, redder than boiled lobster. Why, they have been absolutely skinned.'

'Ah, it's only the liniment,' said he with affected composure. 'Dr Siringem informed me that the effect of the first external application was not unlikely to be peculiar. It shews that I'm just the subject for it, and a very little more of it will do for me.'

'My dear uncle,' said I, gravely, 'I haven't a doubt of it. May I ask where Dr Siringem lives?'

'His professional residence,' replied the patient, pompously, and quoting from the advertisement, 'is 99 Gongoose Street.'

'I don't find it *here*,' observed I carelessly, and turning over the leaves of a Medical Directory.

'No,' cried Uncle Sandars pettishly, 'and I'm very glad of it. I have had water enough injected into my ears already, sir, by your professional gentry: water enough to give a fellow hydrocephalus. This is a man of original genius, sir; you should see him yourself, and hear *him* talk of the Faculty.'

I not only professed submission to the superior intelligence of this wonder, but I accepted my uncle's recommendation, and repaired to Dr Siringem's at once, for his invaluable advice. Not that I was at all deaf, but because I wanted to hear something new—and with the intention of repeating it afterwards.

The door of 99 Gongoose Street was ornamented with a gigantic brass plate, with the name of this Apostle of Hearing conspicuously set forth upon it, and underneath, the words—'The Institution for the Ear.' I was introduced into a small apartment wherein were two male and three female patients awaiting their turn for an interview with the great man. All five had kerchiefs bound under their chin: for my own part, I had but a poor half-penny worth of cotton-wool in my ears, and that not inserted so tightly but that I could hear what was said with considerable ease. My companions were communicative enough, and let me know in some three minutes—at the full stretch of their lungs—that they were, like myself, novices in Gongoose Street, and had been attracted thither solely by the advertisements. Presently, the young man, half-footman, half-medical assistant, who had admitted us, and who—so lachrymose and sympathetic was his appearance—might have been Mr Job Trotter himself, put his head into the room, and beckoned me into his master's sanctum. Why I, the last comer, was selected, I do not pretend to say; perhaps, Mr Trotter was by nature suspicious, or perhaps the circumstances of his profession may have been such as to call forth particular caution; but he certainly did eye me with distrust as he introduced me to the presence of Dr Siringem.

This Benefactor of the Human Family was a florid gentleman, with such huge whiskers and so magnificent a forehead, that your attention was instantaneously swallowed up by those two objects, and diverted from his countenance, which was also much obscured by large blue spectacles.

'What are your particular symptoms, sir?' inquired this gentleman, in an ordinary conversational tone.

I shook my head, and pointed to my ears, with a dumb eloquence that I flatter myself must have been rather touching.

He threw into his forehead an air of tender pity, and elevating his voice, repeated the question.

Again I smiled in a melancholy and maudlin manner, to express my consciousness of his benevolent efforts, and to let him know at the same time that they were fruitless.

The forehead retained its tenderness, but I am much mistaken if the voice did not mutter something like 'Never met with such a fool,' before it ejaculated, in a tone that must have reached two streets off, his original inquiry.

A conversation, which, upon his part, threatened to burst a blood-vessel at every word, was in this manner carried on between us, during which Dr Siringem perfectly convinced me that he knew no more about the causes of deafness than an earwig.

'You undertake, then, to cure me,' said I, referring to his advertisement, 'in seven minutes?'

'In seven minutes and three-quarters,' responded he, with modesty, 'since yours is a very difficult case.'

'Very good,' replied I. 'We will say eight, and I shall be quite contented. Please to begin.'

This determination to be operated upon at once seemed a good deal to stagger the learned doctor.

'It will not be good for you to go out into the air, sir, afterwards.'

'Not good for the hair!' said I, with surprise and innocence.

'The *air*, you idiot'—this complimentary epithet was addressed to me in a lower tone of voice—'the atmosphere, the wind,' screamed the unfortunate physician, 'would be the death of you, sir.'

'Eight minutes,' said I, quietly soliloquising, and taking out my watch; 'it's now just twelve o'clock.'

This action seemed to give the man of science—now almost at his wits' end—a new idea. He produced from his fob a repeater of gigantic size, and standing behind me, applied it to my right ear. 'Do you hear it striking twelve?' roared he.

'No,' said I; 'I don't;' and indeed the repeater was quite silent.

'See here,' cried he, producing a little phial full of the whitish liquid which had skinned my uncle's ears, 'I only just touch the orifice with this fluid,' and I felt my ear tingle as he said so. '*Now*, do you hear my repeater striking twelve?'

If I had not done so, I must have been past curing even by Dr Siringem, for the strokes thundered upon my tympanum like the beats of Great Tom of Oxford.

'Yes, I hear it,' said I, as if in some doubt still, although I was indeed almost made deaf in reality by the uproar.

'And you didn't hear it before, sir, did you?' asked he triumphantly.

'No,' said I, with the utmost truth; 'I certainly did not.'

'The liniment did it,' cried he—'it was all the liniment.'

The ingenuous air of pardonable pride which played upon Dr Siringem's forehead as he stated this enormous falsehood, was worthy of any man's admiration.

'You must take it home, and apply it yourself,' said he, with extreme earnestness and strength of lungs; 'the effect of the first external ap'——

Here I nodded with peculiar intelligence, and interrupted him with the anxious inquiry: 'You are sure it will not hurt me? I can't bear any kind of pain.'

'It *can't* hurt, sir,' insisted he with vehemence; 'it's morally impossible that it can hurt an infant. I'll stake my professional reputation upon its never having given any patient one moment's inconvenience.'

'And in what am I indebted to you for your advice?' inquired I, as I took possession of this invaluable specific.

'In nothing,' said he; 'there is nothing to pay at all.'

'Nothing!' echoed I in a tone of very genuine astonishment.

'Nothing; unless you like to leave a five-pound note or so for *the Institution*.'

'No, thank you,' said I courteously but firmly; 'no, I don't think that I'll do that just now.'

The forehead was still bland, but the whiskers rather bristled up, I thought, as he replied: 'The lotion is twenty-nine and six; and the apparatus for use, without which its application would be dangerous, is three pound ten and sixpence.'

'That will just make five pounds in all,' said I, fumbling in my pocket. 'I have not got so much about me, I find, but it shall be paid for with pleasure upon delivery. I am staying,' said I, as I stood upon the very last step of the front door while Dr Siringem was bidding me farewell, 'with Mr Sandars of Weazel Chambers, Temple, *whom I think you know*.'

My revered relative was very slow to credit this depreciatory account of his idol; but the repeater that did not strike, and the liniment which could not hurt an infant (about which he felt especially indignant), were such complete evidences of fraud, that he determined to present Dr Siringem with a piece of his mind concerning them, forthwith. No sooner, however, did he ring the bell of *the Institution*, upon the ensuing morning, than out came Mr Job Trotter, more sympathetic-looking than ever, with the news that his master was ill in bed. My uncle, who is of a pertinacious disposition, renewed his visit upon the following day, when Dr Siringem was reported to be worse. He visited this Home of Science the third time, and received information from a charwoman that the chambers were given up, and that the learned doctor had sailed—for the benefit of his health—to the Madeiras.

Nevertheless, at this present date, and in apartments at no very considerable distance from Gongoose Street, may be still consulted, for Deafness and Singing in the Ears, one Dr Tympanum, who, although without whiskers, without blue spectacles, and without a particularly high forehead, can be identified by this writer, upon oath, with Dr Siringem; my uncle Sandars, whose credulity is firmer than the faith of many persons, having been enticed by a fresh advertisement to put himself under a second Benefactor to his Species, and having discovered in that individual an old friend with a new face.

KATIE CHALLONER.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAP. II.

THINGS now went on for several weeks much on their old footing, except that Frank spent most of his evenings at Miss Woodville's house. Katie's remonstrances, however, on the subject of his intimacy with his cousin, did not seem to produce any very great result. He assured her that Stonor was not so bad as his uncle represented him. It was true, he was rather gay; not quite so steady as he might have been; but then Frank did not see he was so much worse than many other young men whom everybody knew, and nobody seemed to be very hard upon. Did Katie know that Mr Fountayne had taken Stonor, who had just then completed the third year of his apprenticeship to a medical man, by the hand some years since, just after the sudden death of his father, and had obtained him his present post in the Old Bank, and also promise of advancement; as well as that at the time it was reasonably believed that Stonor, with his two sisters, were to be the principal inheritors under their uncle's will? But all this, so far as Stonor was interested, had been suddenly changed when Mr Fountayne had come to the knowledge of certain conduct of Stonor's, which he characterised as disgraceful, but did not condescend to describe further. Speaking of this conduct, Stonor had admitted, Frank continued, that he could not clear himself of the charges of criminal weakness and folly; but he hardly seemed to feel that he ought to have met with such severe punishment; for his uncle, when he withdrew his good opinion, had left him to struggle on as he could on his poor patrimony, and the proceeds of a very subordinate situation in the Old Bank.

Miss Challoner did not inquire what Stonor's alleged offence was, as Frank rather dreaded she might have done. The fact, known but by very few, was, that he had seduced the daughter of very respectable parents under peculiarly disgraceful circumstances. His own version of the transaction—and the only one, we need scarcely say, that Frank had heard—was, that he had been the object of a plot between the girl and her parents, who had attempted to inveigle him into a marriage, and that, in point of fact, he was the seduced, not the seducer. However, Mr Fountayne, on some uncertain information reaching his ears, had taken the matter up, and in an interview with the unhappy girl and her parents, had had such convincing proofs of Stonor's baseness and treachery laid before him—some in the young man's own handwriting—that he had at once paid down a large sum of money as the only compensation which could then be made. Thus very few ever heard the true facts of the case; and Stonor, in his own circle, was able to obtain credit to the statement he chose to put forth. Had Frank known a tithe of the truth, his reception of his uncle's warnings would have been very different, and he might have been saved from much subsequent sorrow and suffering.

It might have been about four months after Frank and Katie had come to the understanding which seemed so agreeable to all parties concerned, that Mr Fountayne was one morning shewn into the room in which the two ladies were seated at their work-table. It was at once apparent that he was much discomposed. For a while he sat constrained and silent, or making monosyllabic replies to what was said to him, with a heavy gloom on his countenance, and his eyes bent upon the carpet. At last, speaking very abruptly, and with obviously painful effort, he said: 'I have ill news. I would gladly have suppressed it, but I fear it would not be right. My dear young lady,' addressing himself now specially to Katie, 'I fear this unlucky lad is going to disappoint us both. I gave him two cheques yesterday, to be paid into the hands of two different persons—one for L.35, drawn on our London agents; the other for L.20. This is it. It was brought to the bank this morning, and handed to Mr Tuffnell, who happened to be there when the bearer, a disreputable-looking sort of low fellow, came in. Tuffnell, noticing that it was not endorsed, asked him how he came by it. "Found it," said the fellow. 'Where?" "Why, in the billiard-room at Blaydes', when he was shutting up last night. He saw it lying under the table." The fellow shewed no unwillingness to wait while Tuffnell wrote a note, and sent it on to me. I went up at once. The man answered my questions very freely, until I asked him who had been at Blaydes' overnight; and then he shut up close enough. I had not seen Frank this morning before going to the office; he sent me word at breakfast-time that he was feeling very poorly, but that he hoped to be at his desk by noon. On leaving the bank, I went to him at once, and found him in his own room, with all the traces of a night of dissipation about him—untouched breakfast, face pale and haggard, hands hot and shaking, and the rest of it. I asked him if he had paid the cheques I gave him. "No," he said; "he was going to ——" I interrupted him: "Where were they, then?" He answered: "In his pocket-book." "Would he be good enough to hand them over to me?" The pocket-book lay at his elbow. He opened it, and certainly well acted surprise at not finding them. I shewed him this, and told him how I came by it, and asked what explanation he could give. Then came his history of the preceding evening. He had been at this house till about half-past eight. He had left early, in order to deliver the cheques in the proper quarters. He had met Stonor Harrison close to Mr Temple's door. Stonor told him that he was going to ask young Temple to go with him to the theatre; but that if he declined, he would walk on with him, Frank, to his destination. When they went in, the Temples were just sitting down to supper, and were very urgent with them to stop and take some. Both declined, but Mr Temple had insisted on their having a glass of wine. I found—for I have been to Mr Temple's—that this was all quite true, and that Frank only took a little wine, with water to it, which Stonor poured out for him at the same time with his own glass at the sideboard. Miss Temple remembered this distinctly, for Frank was talking to her while Stonor was about the wine, and she thought he was a long time over it. Ten minutes later, they left. Frank's statement further is, that, not long after returning to the street he felt very dizzy, and would have fallen but for Stonor. Then, he says, extreme drowsiness came over him, and he declares he remembers no more until coming to consciousness, about four o'clock this morning, and finding himself in his own bed. The housekeeper says he was brought home by Mr Harrison about eleven o'clock last night in a strange, excited state, though not seeming to be at all sensible. Somehow, she says, it was not like a tipsy man's condition. From Frank I went to Stonor at the bank. His tale tallied exactly with Frank's and Temple's, up to the time of their leaving the house of the latter. He says he was then struck with his cousin's unsteadiness of gait and motion, and, but for his temperate habits, would have concluded he had been drinking. They were at no great distance from his (Stonor's) lodgings, he went on, and with some trouble he got him in there. After a few minutes, however, Frank seemed to be much recovered, and urged on him to go to the theatre, as he had originally intended; while, as for himself, he would remain quiet a little longer, and then go home and to bed. Stonor went on to say he did as Frank suggested and seemed to wish; and on returning about half-past ten, met the latter staggering along in a very excited state in Thomas Street—the very street, you know, that Blaydes' house, where the cheque was found, stands in. One of them lies—that's clear; I wish it may not be both—that they are not in collusion. It would be all up with the poor lad, if it were so.'

'Would not inquiry at Blaydes' be useful?' suggested Miss Woodville.

'I thought it might,' replied her visitor; 'and I went; but I might as well have asked the lamp at the door who had been there the night before. "They were not in the habit of publishing abroad who went there. If I wanted to know, I had better come and see. If anything wrong had been done in the house, they supposed a warrant could be got, and they should know what to answer when people asked questions that had a right to ask them." Then there is the L.35 cheque still to be accounted for. I don't mind the money; but that that lad should deceive me so'—and poor Mr Fountayne's voice faltered, and he brushed an intrusive tear roughly away. He had got up as if to go away, then sat down again, then walked over to Katie, and took her hand in his. 'I am very sorry for you, my dear. He had better go away. I have offered him a post in Australia. Perhaps he may do well, after all. God bless you, my dear! You didn't deserve this.' And so he hurried out of the room.

Katie had been very quiet. Mr Fountayne's unwonted tenderness had shaken her self-possession at the last, and his abrupt departure had prevented her saying what was burning to find utterance. Turning to her aunt, as Mr Fountayne was heard leaving the house, she declared her unhesitating conviction that Frank was most wrongly suspected; and Miss Woodville had no wish to combat her convictions.

While the two ladies were still engaged in arraying all the manly, straightforward traits in Frank's character, all their knowledge and experience of him for years, as so many witnesses to prove his innocence under these grave imputations, a note in his well-known handwriting was brought to Katie. It ran thus—

'Dearest Katie—You will have heard all my uncle can tell you. Will you see me before I go?—Always yours, Frank Fountayne.'

The reply was written with eager haste.

'Dear Frank—I don't believe a word of it. Come to me as soon as you can.—Your affectionate Katie Challoner.'

In a very short time after the dispatch of this missive, his step was heard on the stairs; not bounding and joyous, as usual, but slow, and as if weary. Katie was not prepared to see such a haggard face as met her eye, and started in shocked surprise; then her momentary pause gave place to a hasty movement to meet him, and she fairly threw herself into his arms. All her self-control left her now. She sobbed convulsively on his bosom, clinging closer and closer to him. He led her gently to the sofa, and made her sit down by her aunt, kneeling by her side, and clasping her hands in his. 'Never mind, Frank,' she said, when at last she could command her voice sufficiently; '*I* don't believe it; nor does my aunt. Don't go, aunt,' seeing Miss Woodville gathering her wools and silks together, as if about to move; 'I want you to hear all I say to him. Don't go to Australia, Frank. Stay here, and trust to time, and to your own noble character and blameless conduct, to clear you. The truth will come out some day. I have enough for us both. And I will be your wife.' Oh, how beautiful she looked in her excitement, as she rose from her seat, still speaking—'I will be your wife—the sooner the better, that they may see *I* don't think so ill of you.'

It was with some difficulty that Frank succeeded in inducing her to lay enthusiasm on one side, and to listen patiently to what he wished her to hear. He would never consent, he said, that she should bear a stained name. His uncle held him guilty, and would, he knew, continue to do so, until tangible proof to the contrary could be produced; and of course, if he did, others would too. Besides, he owed far too much to Mr Fountayne's well-tried kindness to act in defiance of his wishes, as he certainly would be doing if he persisted in remaining in Cliffborough, and absolutely declined the Australian offer—made to him, he verily believed, in entire kindness and anxiety for his prosperity. Nor could he consent to owe all to her, while he still had the power of working in him. He should scorn himself, if he became an idle pensioner on his wife's liberality. He could go to Australia. He *had* purposed, when he asked to be permitted to see her, to set her free from any nominal engagement between them; but after the proofs she had given of noble confidence and generous affection, he would not wrong her so much. He would clear his name; he would win a better one; and then he would come and claim her; and he was sure she would eventually see he was right in this.

After much opposition, this arrangement was agreed to; and presently they began to revert to the incidents of the preceding evening. Frank had no distinct recollection of anything that had taken place from about ten or fifteen minutes after leaving Mr Temple's, until waking in his own bed, between four and five in the morning, with racking temples and fevered frame. For anything he *knew*, he might have been out, as Stonor said he had; and only in this way could he at all account for the disappearance of the cheques. He missed nothing else out of the pocket-book besides a few memoranda, of no great value even to himself. But it was a strange circumstance, if his pocket-book had been plundered while he was out, that it should have been restored again after the abstraction of the cheques. Part of the distressing phantasms of his troubled night had been connected with these documents. Of course, it was possible that he had abstracted them himself in his more than semi-delirious state; and, *if* he had been in the streets, might have dropped them for some finder to take into Blaydes', and to drop again there—at least one of them; and that one had the impress of a boot-heel upon it, as if it had been trodden upon in the streets.

The subject was now dismissed; and after the discussion of one or two minor matters connected with his probable prolonged absence, he took his leave, infinitely cheered and revivified by the noble confidence of his betrothed. Only one source of anxiety now appeared to be remaining, and this originated in the thought that possibly these distressing seizures, with two of which he had now been attacked, might be due to some hidden constitutional cause, and himself, therefore, liable to a recurrence of them; for if this should be so, he knew he must live without hope of success in any vocation. His last evening at Cliffborough was, I hardly need say, spent in Katie's society; and her entire trust and confidence, and her thorough appreciation of the motives by which he was influenced in the line of conduct he was adopting, were as cheeringly apparent in her every word and suggestion, as if it had been her sole object to manifest it.

Two days after, he sailed, and in due time reached Melbourne and his destination. He was not long, after his arrival, in discovering that it was indeed time for some one really interested in that branch of Fountayne & Co.'s business to be on the spot and energetically at work. Accordingly, he applied himself diligently, and with so much judgment as well as vigour, that before twelve months from the day of his arrival had elapsed, the results of his presence and energy had so tangibly manifested themselves to the firm at home, and his conduct and business qualifications had been so spoken of by their correspondents in the colony, that one fine morning Mr Fountayne was seen seated between Miss Woodville's sofa and Katie's chair, and heard addressing the latter thus: 'My dear young lady, I do hope that, after all, your confidence and disinterestedness are going to be justified. Look at these letters from Messrs Goldbeater of Melbourne, and then at this, which is to be forwarded to him at the desire of the firm. They will give you pleasure.' And they did give her pleasure. The former contained unqualified praises of Frank's whole conduct and measures: the latter, a formal acknowledgment of the services he had rendered, and in circumstances that had required no ordinary judgment and decision.

'Well, perhaps, after all, I may have been a little too hard upon him,' said Mr Fountayne as Katie returned the papers; 'but it was all that scoundrel Stonor, I am sure. If Frank would only have kept him at a distance, he would never have been led or entrapped into that misconduct.'

'Misconduct, Mr Fountayne,' cried Katie, half in earnest, half in playful anger; 'didn't I tell you I would not permit you to use such words before me? And you'll see that I am right, too, some of these days.'

'Well, well, young lady,' he rejoined, 'I forgot. I'll try and remember another time.'

The first thing which had rather shaken Mr Fountayne's conviction as to Frank's guilty participation in the business of the cheques, was the reappearance of the missing one. It had been drawn in favour of a Mr G. D. Smith; and, for his convenience, on Fountayne & Co.'s London agents. About a fortnight after Frank's departure, it had been presented for payment at the London house by a highly respectable draper, with whom Mr Smith, for a length of time past, had had very extensive dealings. Mr Smith's signature had been very cleverly forged at the back, and such ingenious use made of an evidently accurate knowledge of his business and connection with the draper in question, that the latter had taken the cheque as a matter of course, and had even kept it a few days in his possession before sending it to the bank. The most searching inquiry for the person who had passed it ended in nothing. He was described as wearing a large red moustache and beard; the latter particularly thick and bushy; and when making the purchases for which he had paid with the cheque, he had incidentally stated that he was about proceeding to Hobart Town. A person answering the description was traced to the Euston Station, and into the night mail-train; but there all clue was lost. The parties employed in the investigation stated their belief that the person in question had worn a disguise, and had taken his opportunity of dropping it unnoticed on his journey.

Still the result had been of service to Frank, by clearing him of all complicity in the negotiation of the check. Mr Fountayne himself had gone up with him to London, and they had arrived only a few hours before it was necessary for him to be on board; while even these hours had been spent by Frank in company with his uncle.

Our tale must now make a stride over a period of nearly two years and a half. It so chanced, about that time, that a business complication rendered his presence in England almost imperative. He had consequently been recalled, and was expected home in the course of a few weeks; and he would come, moreover, possessed of the entire confidence of Messrs Fountayne & Co. Matters had continued precisely as they were before his departure, at Miss Woodville's; and she was longing, almost as eagerly and hopefully as Katie, for the return of 'her dear boy,' as she had lately taken to call him.

Matters, however, had not remained *in statu quo* with Stonor Harrison. His conduct lately, had become most unsatisfactory, and his visits to Blaydes' notorious; he had given himself up to intemperate courses, and been guilty of so great irregularities as to render his dismissal from the bank inevitable; consequently, though with much reluctance on the part of the principals, he had been informed that his further services would be dispensed with. On receiving his dismissal, he had at once proceeded to his lodgings—which for nearly two years past had been at Mr G. D. Smith's—had packed up his belongings, and had left Cliffborough within twenty-four hours; it was believed, with the intention of proceeding to Australia.

But leaving mention of his fortunes for the present, we must proceed without loss of time to London. Frank Fountayne has arrived in that city in the course of the morning, a passenger by the good ship *Launceston*. Proceeding, as soon as he had landed, with a portmanteau and carpet-bag only, to a hotel at some little distance from the docks, always used by his uncle when in town on shipping business, and familiar to himself from having more than once been his uncle's companion on such occasions, he has spent some hours, after securing rooms and ordering dinner, in writing letters, and revising a series of formidable-looking documents. Dinner despatched, he has proceeded to the docks to make arrangements about some part of the ship's freight with which he is concerned, and we see him just returning, and on the point of hailing a cab from a neighbouring stand. At the moment he turned for this purpose, a passer-by, proceeding rapidly in the direction from which he had just come, ran sharply against him, and with a hasty 'I beg your pardon,' was proceeding on his way. Frank's ear was struck by the tone, and looking at the speaker, the light from a lamp under which he was passing enabled him at once to recognise his cousin. 'Stonor, old fellow!' he exclaimed, rejoicing to see a Cliffborough face, 'where do you spring from? How are you?' The voice enabled Stonor to do that which the browned face and magnificent beard of the man who had addressed him would otherwise have made somewhat difficult, and he in his turn recognised Frank. 'Are you very particularly engaged?' asked the latter, after the interchange of greetings. 'Just come with me to the hotel, and let me know the latest from Cliffborough.' Stonor assented, and they drove off in the cab which Frank had called.

Neither of them, however, had noticed a person who had passed them—coming from the direction of the docks—a second or two after Frank's first exclamation, and who had been quietly watching them during their pause in the street. Still less could they observe that, as their cab drove off, this person got into another, and ordered the driver to keep that in which they were seated in sight, and to stop when it drew up to put them down. He was thus enabled to see them go up the steps of the hotel together, and enter. He remained on the watch close by until a policeman came past on his beat, who seemed to recognise him as he gave some whispered instructions, hastily departing the moment after. In the meantime, Frank had ordered coffee, and while he was busy in looking out two or three papers which he thought might be useful or interesting to his cousin, whose intended departure for Australia he had been informed of during their transit in the cab, Stonor was engaged in pouring out the coffee.

Half an hour later, the bell of Frank's room rang violently; and the waiter, hurrying up, saw, as he opened the door, Frank on the floor, apparently lifeless. He was hurriedly desired by Stonor to send or bring immediate help to get the gentleman into his bedroom, and also to despatch a messenger instantly for the nearest doctor. The waiter, hastily informing Stonor that the bedroom was close at hand—the next room but one—helped him to raise Frank and carry him to the bed, and then rushed off for medical assistance.

The moment his back was turned, Stonor might have been seen to take his cousin's keys from his pocket and hastily unlock his portmanteau. A small wooden box of ordinary construction and appearance, but excessively weighty for its size, and a canvas bag, evidently containing money, were at once seized and concealed; and as the sound of approaching steps was heard, the portmanteau was hastily closed, but not locked; there being no time for that.

The master of the hotel came into the room. He knew both Mr Fountayne and Frank very well, as Stonor was aware. Hastily expressing his concern at seeing his cousin so ill, and adding that he had seen him taken in this sudden way once or twice before, Mr Harrison said he would go and hurry the arrival of medical advice, and left the room, and in a few seconds after, the hotel. He took the direction of the docks, and proceeded rapidly on his way. His ship, as he had told Frank, was to sail very early in the morning, and he had to be on board by nine that evening. Little did he think that every step he took was marked by the policeman, who kept a little in his rear on the other side of the street; that he dogged him to the ship, and remained to see he did not leave it again.

We must now return to Frank. But a very short time elapsed after Stonor's departure before a medical man arrived. He appeared to be a little puzzled at first, but after a few moments had passed, said that if he had seen the patient anywhere but in a respectable house he should have said he had been 'hocussed.' He was in a state of comatose slumber, induced, to all appearance, by a heavy dose of some powerful narcotic. He looked around, but no traces of any such substance were seen in either room. He inquired about the manner of the seizure, and hearing that another gentleman had been with the patient at the time, asked where he was; and on receiving the landlord's answer, shook his head, and said the case was mysterious, and more than that. At this moment, the landlord observed the keys in the lock of the portmanteau, and stooping to secure them, perceived a very small phial lying close to, and partially concealed by, the trunk. Picking it up, he handed it to the doctor at once, who saw directly that it belonged to a homœopathic case, and contained—according to its label—just such a drug as given in a sufficient dose would produce the symptoms exhibited by his patient. Instituting such measures as he deemed most advisable, he eventually succeeded in restoring poor Frank to some sort of consciousness. But the night was mainly spent by him in wretched delirium; and the morning saw him, quite conscious indeed, but wretchedly broken down, and ill.

Nor was the news that greeted him at nine o'clock calculated to have a very soothing influence on his sadly irritable nerves. A canvas bag and a wooden box—the former with his name on it, the latter with his initials—were brought to him by a police-officer. Did he know anything about them? 'Yes, indeed; they were his: the bag contained a hundred and fifty sovereigns, and the box about five pounds of gold-dust. They had been safe in his portmanteau the preceding evening. Who had taken them out?' Then came a history of Stonor's apprehension, overnight, for forgery, and of the discovery of these things in his trunk. The doctor had come in as the officer was making his inquiries, and he had listened to his communication. Producing the phial which had been picked up last night, he asked the officer if he had seen anything of that sort about his prisoner.

'Yes,' replied the man, 'I found this in the pocket of his overcoat,' exhibiting a small homœopathic case; 'and just one phial was wanting to complete its complement.'

'It is tolerably clear now, my dear sir,' said the doctor, turning to Frank, 'how you came into that disagreeable condition last evening. It is not the first time, I should say, that your amiable companion had tried the trick. He must have done it very neatly.'

By noon, Mr Fountayne was seated by his nephew's bedside. On the receipt of the landlord's telegraphic dispatch communicating Frank's alarming seizure, he had posted to the county town, to catch a train which would enable him to reach London some hours sooner than the first morning train from Cliffborough. And in the course of the afternoon, as Frank began to find himself a good deal recovered, his uncle proceeded to give him the following details.

Before Stonor's departure from Cliffborough, he had been seen, while preparing to leave his lodgings, to burn a good many of his papers; while others had simply been torn across and thrown into the waste-paper basket. Among the rest, he had thrown an old blotting-pad into the basket, very much worn and frayed at the edges and corners, very much reduced in thickness, and certainly not worth keeping. However, the two youngest of Mr Smith's children, when Stonor's late rooms were in course of being put in readiness, some ten days after his vacation of them, to receive another inmate, seemed to be of a different opinion; and there was a little dispute between them whose it should be. Presently, the elder of the two, a little girl of five, who thought much of her proficiency in penmanship because she could both write her own name and read it when written—her initials, by the way, being the same as her father's—seemed to think the question was decided in her favour by the discovery of a small piece of writing-paper, which she had drawn out from between two of the remaining sheets of the pad, and which had the name 'G. D. Smith' written upon it several times. The dispute hereupon became so hot, that Mr Smith interposed. Little Georgiana produced her document, and triumphantly awaited a verdict in her favour. To her father's surprise, he saw his own name, written in his own handwriting, no less than seven times on one quarter of a half-sheet of note-paper. Looking at it again, he doubted if it were his own writing; and closer inspection convinced him it was an imitation. But by whom made? and for what purpose? The former question seemed to be answered by the blotting-pad, but not the latter. He took the pad into his hand, opened it at the part the little girl pointed out as the place she had drawn the paper from, and there found several ink-marks, which seemed to correspond with one or two of the signatures on the paper. Next, proceeding—though sorely to the discomfiture of poor Georgy's pride of possession—to insinuate a paper-knife at this place, and completely to separate the marked sheet, he held it between his eye and the light; and as he did so, one 'G. D. Smith' near the corner, and with a small blot at the end of the flourished line beneath it, instantly caught his eye. He remembered a blot like that well; and seizing his hat, rushed off to the bank in extreme haste. He was well aware that what he wanted had been carefully preserved there, and would be immediately produced at his request. Mr Tuffnell was in his private room. Mr Smith entered and explained his business. The L.35 check was instantly forthcoming, and the forged signature at the back compared with the marks on the blotting-paper. Their identity was unquestionable.

The discovery was at once communicated to Mr Fountayne. Distressed and grieved as he was by the information, he still urged no objection to the judicial investigation which was immediately proposed and determined on.

The next step, clearly, was to trace, if possible, Stonor's movements; but beyond a vague intimation of his purpose to go to Australia, nothing whatever had transpired to give any clue to his whereabouts. But here again the blotting-pad afforded some important information. The two outside sheets having been taken off and examined as the other had been, on one of them was seen part of the address of a letter, of which enough was legible to enable Mr Smith and Mr Tuffnell to identify the designation of a well-known firm in Leadenhall Street, very largely connected with the Australian shipping-trade.

The London police had been promptly communicated with; it so happened that the communication reached them the very day Frank had arrived. Their first step had been to make inquiries at the office of Messrs Hodgson and Butts, the shippers; and a letter from Stonor Harrison, requiring information about ships, dates of sailing, and passage-money, with notes appended of reply forwarded to address given, had been found on the file. The only other information, however, which was obtained here, was that one of their ships was to sail at an early hour the next morning.

The police agent, therefore, went next to the ship in question; and finding an opportunity of casting his eye over the list of passengers who had taken berths, found among them the name of Harrison. As he was returning from this investigation, to make his report, he was an accidental witness to the *rencontre* between Frank and his cousin; and the sound of the name by which the latter was addressed, taken in connection with the direction in which he was going, at once led the agent to the conclusion that there, most likely, was the very gentleman who was 'wanted.' We have seen how he followed Frank's cab, and set a subordinate in the force on the watch, while he himself went to report to the officer under whose instructions he was acting.

The latter took immediate measures to ascertain the certainty of the circumstances of suspicion, or rather presumption, stated by his emissary. On reaching the hotel, the absence of the policeman left on guard shewed that the object of their solicitude was no longer there. A brief inquiry was made, and then the party proceeded in the direction of the docks. The constable who had seen Stonor safe to the ship, reported him as still on board. No very lengthened inquiry was necessary to assure them that they were on the right scent, and they accordingly proceeded to arrest Mr Harrison. He had offered a desperate resistance, and in the violent scuffle which ensued, was thrown down with such force that his head had been most severely bruised and cut against some part of the ship's furniture. He was completely stunned by the severity of the concussion, and his capture effectually completed.

We may here state, as briefly as we can, that the unhappy young man was found, on surgical examination, to be most seriously injured. On the third day, erysipelas supervened—induced, beyond doubt, by the grievous irregularities he had lately indulged in. For three days, then, he was incessantly raving; after this, for a brief space, consciousness returned, and he became aware that there was no chance of his ultimate recovery.

His uncle had visited him as frequently as prison regulations would permit; and although, on his earlier visits, he had been met with sullen reserve, and once or twice with insolent defiance; yet, afterwards, when the sufferer recognised his weakness, and the hopelessness of his condition, his manner underwent a very great change, and eventually, he was led to confess all his iniquity.

He had hated Frank from the time Mr Fountayne had begun to shew him kindness. He had looked on him as his own successful rival, or rather supplanter; and he had determined to ruin him if he could; but Frank's extremely temperate habits, found proof against repeated trial, had been sadly in his way. Having, however, once heard his cousin make mention of the manner in which he was affected by strong opiates, it occurred to him—more in the way of malicious experiment, he said, than with any set purpose—to drug him. He did so that night, at his own lodgings; and while Frank was lying insensible, under the influence of the drug, he had himself gone to Blaydes', putting on his cousin's cap and overcoat, which was a rather peculiar one, as he went out for the purpose. He was there seen by Mr Turner, whose mistake as to the person had been a contingency he could not have reckoned on, but which worked better in the direction he desired than almost any plan he could have possibly arranged and executed himself.

After the success of his first experiment, he always carried the means for his nefarious schemes with him, to be used as opportunity offered, for he did not wish to repeat the attempt at his own rooms; and he could not, of course, at Frank's, since he never went near his uncle's residence. His special object, on this occasion, had been to obtain possession of the cheques, which his cousin had told him he was just proceeding to deliver to the persons for whom they were intended. Having accomplished this, he had succeeded in 'dropping' one of them in the billiard-room, and getting it 'found' the moment he was gone by the person who, the next morning, took it to the bank, and who had received a guinea for acting the part he did in the transaction. The other cheque he had passed himself, with the assistance of a false beard, and his intimate acquaintance with Smith and his business.

A few hours after this confession, and attempts at restoration, had been made, Stonor Harrison lay dead.

All Frank's business in town had been completed by the evening of the day on which Stonor's case had assumed so serious a complexion. Much as his heart yearned to be at Cliffborough, and for the moment in which he should present himself, cleared of all suspicion, before Katie Challoner, he was still unwilling to leave his uncle, and especially under such circumstances; and so he waited, and had his reward in the formal absolution pronounced by his cousin's confession.

We need not describe the journey down, nor the meeting with Miss Woodville and Katie. There was scarcely a cloud to interfere with the fair happiness of any one of the party; and it must suffice to say that Frank found Katie quite unaltered in her devotion to him; that she did, before long, go to the parish church in company with him, although not, as she had once proposed, in defiance of public opinion in general, and Mr Fountayne's in particular; that one month before this, he had become a junior partner in the flourishing firm of Fountayne & Co.; that he has since passed through joy and through sorrow, and has found his wife equally precious, equally necessary in both; that he has—to say nothing of a Reginald, a Bessie Woodville, and a Jamie—a younger Katie growing up at his side, much what the elder Katie was when she was of the same age; and that all men at Cliffborough, and elsewhere, who know him and his wife, are of one mind in thinking that they well deserve their prosperity.

THE PROVINCIAL IN LONDON.

To a provincial, much engaged in public as well as private business in his own place, there is both repose and refreshment in a week of London. The noteless-ness and solitude into which he passes, gives a relief beyond all description. It was the second week of June which I spent in London on this occasion, and a hot and dusty one it was. That unamiable crop, the turnips, which won't thrive in weather agreeable to the public, were said not to be growing at all. The hay was to be a short crop. There was a talk of bad exhalations from the Thames, and F. O. W. was probably in hopes of a black fever breaking out in the House of Commons, in order to create a conviction in favour of improved sewerage. Still, the parks, the gardens, and surrounding country, seemed in fine leafy condition, and nobody spoke of the heat as oppressive.

Three or four days of hard debating during this week settled the fate of the Derby administration, after a miraculous existence of fifteen months. What a pleasant, easy-going machine is the British constitution! That night when the question was to be settled whether the Queen's immediate advisers were to be removed from her side or not, I found her majesty and her right worthy consort enjoying, like myself, a few hours of intense fun in the Olympic

Theatre. Royal personages at English theatres usually sit demurely screened, or half-screened, behind curtains; but the humours of the unparalleled Robson were too much for court refinements, and I now and then observed the royal pair leaning over to follow the wonderful little man about the stage, apparently quite fascinated by his drollery. What a genius, by the way, is Robson! He acted on this occasion as a poor porter and as a pickpocket. The humour, simplicity, and pathos of the first character, and the utter burlesque of the second, were astonishing. In forty years, I have seen nothing on the stage equal to it. He is altogether such a performer as I would conceive Tarleton to have been —the favourite of the London audiences of the time of Elizabeth, and whose mere mode of progression as he beat a little drum was enough to throw thousands into convulsions of merriment. I repeatedly observed the other actors at a loss to maintain their countenances while playing up to him.

The only other theatre I was able to visit was the Adelphi, where I found excellent acting by Mr and Mrs Wigan and others, and had occasion to feel most thoroughly pleased with certain new arrangements for the benefit of the audience. Heretofore, in London, a provincial like myself always felt that going to a theatre was the pursuit of pleasure under difficulties. If a seat was to be engaged, a fee forming 20 per cent. on the ticket had to be paid. I had to bribe my way through uncivil officials into a seat where I was cramped for want of room, and made miserable by heat and want of air. The Adelphi, as now remodelled, proceeds on an entirely new principle—namely, that it is well and fitting to facilitate a person's access to the theatre, to treat him civilly, and to make him as comfortable as possible. Audience comes away happy, and desirous of returning, instead of soured and disgusted. All praise to the sagacity and good feeling which have suggested and carried out this improvement, and may the example be followed.

The approaching close of the management of the Princess's Theatre, and final retirement of Mr Charles Kean from the stage, formed one of the topics of the day, and arrangements were making for giving him a suitable testimonial. Every one seems to feel that the merits of Mr Kean as an actor and manager, and his exemplary conduct in a trying position in life, well entitle him to such a public tribute. Remembering his father at his first outburst on the greater theatres, I cannot but feel a regret at the name now making its exit from the stage, in all probability for ever. Mr, and, I must in fairness add, Mrs Charles Kean, may be assured of a high place in the history of the English stage. Altogether, irrespective of their strictly professional merits, they have done an original thing, created a new pleasure—call it what you will—in putting those great historical tableaux of Macbeth, and Henry VIII., and Pericles, before our eyes and understandings.

I spent a morning in the Royal Academy's Exhibition, and was, on the whole, but moderately pleased. There is, no doubt, much good work, and there are some fine pictures; but the mediocre and the erroneous sadly predominate. A Gothic interior by Roberts, a sea-piece by Stanfield, a touch of lively Spanish life by Phillip, a life-breathing portrait by Gordon or Grant, can never fail to give pleasure; and there they are. One picture of familiar life, by Faed, is, in a modest way, most felicitous; it depicts a decent Scotch family spending their Sunday in the Backwoods—one engaged in reading the Bible to the rest —a grown daughter ill, and an object of care: the whole suggesting the pensive, dreamy recollection of a distant and never-again-to-be-seen home. This small but finely executed picture makes the chest collapse and the eyes well out by its touching natural sentiment. But how much of tolerable work is there in this exhibition as good as thrown away, from the infelicity of the choice of subject, and how positively offensive is this ghastly eccentricity of pre-Raphaelism, which seems to have taken out a commission for overdoing the trivial and canonising the ugly. Think of the folly of painting an orchard in its every individual blossom, distributing a few girls of unheard-of plainness in meaningless attitudes over the ground, and calling the whole a picture!

The difficulties of the London streets seem as great as ever. I had actually to wait ten minutes one day before I could get across Regent Street to make a call at a shop. There were five lines of carriages on the *pavé* at the time, moving different ways, and it was only by dodging into one line, passing into another when a break occurred, and so on to a third, that one could make one's way through. It will come erelong to wire-bridges at the crossings, if there be not some relief for the present great thoroughfares. An example of what promise to be new and pleasant features of the streets, pleased me much. I refer to the public drinking-fountain recently erected at the corner of St Sepulchre's churchyard in Newgate Street. A tiny rill continually flows; and during the quarter of an hour I stood looking on, it was never left more than an instant unused, there being an incessant stream of drinkers, wholly of the industrial classes. A thermometer and barometer inserted in the fabric, behind stout glass, gives an air of civilisation to this new institution.

Another new institution of London is the starting of a select band of maimed soldiers as *commissionaires* or guides. There is an affecting interest in seeing the medals on the breasts of these worthy fellows, and contrasting their alert and active appearance with the mutilations which have in a manner rated them as old while still young. I sincerely hope they will thrive in their new vocation. Speaking of them brings me to advert to what is called the Victoria Cross Gallery in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. I spent half a morning in looking over this peculiar exhibition, which consists of a series of pictures by Mr Desanges, representing special feats of gallantry in the recent Russian and Indian wars, by which individuals had won the Victoria Cross. The artist, till recently known only as a first-rate painter of ladies' portraits, has here entered on a new field of exertion, and perhaps he will yet be able to give his work a higher finish. Meanwhile, we have faithful portraiture from sittings of the actual heroes, and a careful study of all the accessories of the various scenes, joined to great vividness of general effect. We have the stripling officer coolly putting his young life into the greatest jeopardy; his senior calmly entering the mouth of Destruction, as it were, with his eye-glass in his eye; the gallant private or corporal risking his own life to bring away a favourite wounded officer; the doctor quietly dressing wounds under fire of the enemy: in short, nearly every conceivable form of heroism. One of the pleasantest to look upon is young Lieutenant Hewett's repulse of a sortie of the Russians at Sebastopol with a single gun which he had been ordered to abandon. The immediate consequence to himself is related in the catalogue. 'His commanding officer thus interrogated him: "Mr Hewett, were you not ordered to spike the gun and retreat?" "I was, sir." "And you chose to disregard the order and fight the gun?" "I did, sir; but I am sorry if"—— "Well, then, you are promoted."'

Chancing to pass down Regent Street one day in a cab, I came up alongside of a funereal procession, following a car on which lay a coffin covered by a heraldically decorated pall. It proved to be the second interment of the gallant Sir Thomas Picton, who fell at Waterloo. He had been inhumed at the time with little ceremony in the plain and uninteresting cemetery of St George's parish on the Oxford Road, and now, at the distance of forty-four years, he was to get a more fitting hero's tomb in St Paul's Cathedral. Remembering as a dream of boyhood the story of his death read from the official dispatches in the newspapers, I felt it as a strange thing to be present at the final disposal of his remains. Strange, too, to see what might be called a stream of historical sentiment making its way through the common-place details of that busy London street. Among the carriages following was a royal one; but it was only an empty show. Far more interesting to me were the vehicles conveying Sir Thomas's veteran brother-officers—hale old gentlemen most of them appeared to be, but one of them so very old that he seemed sunk in the repose of a second childhood. Waterloo officers, who enjoyed any considerable rank at the time, must soon necessarily become lions from their rarity. Yet, rather oddly, there still survives, and in unabated vigour, one of those who were heads of departments on that occasion, namely, Sir James Grant; his department being the *medical.*

The rifle-corps-forming movement, evoked by the Italian war, although promoted by various influences, including the natural love of every young man for 'a gun,' did not seem to be making much way in the metropolis. I suspect it must be some more imminent danger which will induce men to break up their industrial pursuits in order to become quasi-soldiers. To suspect the French emperor the very year after he might have assailed us in a nearly defenceless position, *and didn't,* of going round about by Lombardy, through half a million of Austrians, in order to attack us, is a piece of goosery which could not well become national. There were, however, plenty of people in London who have such an opinion of him, in consequence of his antecedents, as to believe that he contemplates objects of pure personal aggrandisement in the present war. I do not wonder at this, but I do not join in it. To free Italy from that tyrant power under which it groans, and to leave it in a condition of independence, would make Louis Napoleon a greater man than his uncle; and I think he has too much sense to prefer a meaner result. How strange, by the way, that any considerable number of people amongst us should have sympathies with those Austrians, who have only been known in history as tyrants over innocent neighbouring nationalities, and destroyers of religious freedom! Strange that men should thrill at the stories of Morgarten and Sempach, or groan over the tale of the sack of Magdeburg, who will yet hear without emotion of the frantic joy of the people of Milan when Magenta cleared their streets of the myrmidons of Francis Joseph.

HOP VILLA.

I HAD not seen Luke Swinton for thirty years; and so long ago we were class-mates and sworn chums. In the interim, I had been knocked about, the very shuttlecock of fortune, until at last the capricious dame gave me the means of coming home—that is, to England—with the prospect of ending my days there. I said I had not seen Luke Swinton for thirty years, and yet when he and I accidentally jostled each other 'on Change,' soon after my arrival, there was enough of the old face left for me to recognise it.

'You are Luke Swinton,' I said, and held out my hand.

'And you are'—— He looked inquiringly, and his palm, slowly extended, touched mine with a doubtful clasp, till I filled up the sentence:

'James Ashburton.'

No want of cordiality when those words fell on his ear. 'To think I did not know you,' said he. 'But thirty years make many changes, and yours has been a roving life, by all accounts. You shall tell me everything by and by.'

I shook my head. 'Mine would be too long a story in detail; but you may fill it up from the outline. I went away poor; I have not returned rich, though with enough to supply a bachelor's wants.'

'I am sorry you are a bachelor, my dear fellow,' said my old mate, eyeing me compassionately. 'But there is a bright side to everything; and you can go home with me to dinner without its being necessary to ask permission; moreover, you can give orders for your baggage to be forwarded to Hop Villa—my little place out of town—without fear that your other half will lodge a detainer. Depend on it, I shall not soon part with you.'

'And can you really give such an invitation without the cognizance of the lady that owns you? O happy Benedict!' continued I, laughing; 'tell me where I may find such a partner, and I will forthwith join your fraternity.'

'Don't talk rashly, James; but rather make all the preparations you need for a long visit, and join me two hours hence.'

He named the place of meeting. Both were punctual, and we duly arrived at Hop Villa.

I did not expect to see such a lovely domain as that which called my old friend master, and its extent as far exceeded my anticipations as did its beauty. 'So this is your home?' I asked, my face expressing both surprise and pleasure.

'Yes, all is really mine these boundaries enclose. I see you wonder how it came to be so; but I do not like to begin a long story before dinner, so be patient a while longer.'

We were near the house when we came upon the gardener, who was examining the withered remains of an old hop-vine.

'Is it quite dead, Scott?' asked my friend.

'Quite, sir. Shall I remove it?'

'I suppose you must; but I feel sorry to give the order. Remember, you procure and plant another in its place immediately. I must not have Hop Villa without one vine.'

'I have been wondering,' said I, 'what induced you to give this charming place the name it bears—if, indeed, you acted as its sponsor.'

'Ah! thereby hangs a—or rather the—tale; but wait till after dinner.'

I must say I felt very forlorn, in comparison with my friend, when I saw the joyous greetings he received from a handsome matron, and half-a-dozen boys and girls, varying in age from six to eighteen. In spite of his mock-lugubrious expression of face, when he informed me that these formed only a portion of his 'responsibilities,' for one olive branch was at college, and the youngest tendrils of his household vine would come in with the dessert, one might see that his home deserved the name. It was pleasant to receive a sort of reflected edition of all their cordiality, and I felt my heart warm in return, though I knew their welcome was for Luke's sake, not from personal friendship towards me.

'Scott is just grubbing up the old hop-vine, Nelly,' said my friend to his wife.

This remark called forth quite a chorus of regretful expressions, and made me ask for information as to the cause of such universal interest.

'Patience, James,' said Swinton; and 'Dinner,' said a servant at the same moment; so I was fain to marshal my hostess to the dining-room, and endure uncomplainingly several jocose remarks on the subject of 'hops,' which were evidently generally understood, though I could not comprehend their meaning.

Much as I admired my host's charming family, I felt glad when he and I had the dining-room to ourselves, with a prospect of an unrestrained chat.

'My wife was a very fall-in-love-with-able person, seven-and-twenty years ago,' said Luke, after the door had closed upon that lady.

'You need not tell me what she was, old fellow,' I replied: 'she is charming still; and I would soon let her know my opinion, if she were a widow.'

'Thank you. I have no wish to test your sincerity in the mode you so feelingly hint at. But take my word for it, in those bygone days, Nelly would have been bad to match. I was intended for the church, as you are aware, and went to college with that profession in view; but during my very first vacation, I met Nelly at a Christmas-party, and she changed everything.'

'Did Nelly object to parsons, then?'

'No; but her father did. The old man was very rich, and had amassed his wealth by trade; so he was determined to have a merchant, and no other, for a son-in-law. Nelly was dutiful—though she owned her regard for me—and would enter into no engagement unsanctioned by her father. So the end of it was, that I never went back to Cambridge, but entered the old merchant's office as a clerk.'

'Very chivalrous, I am sure; but I presume you would have resigned crowns as well as a mitre—in perspective—to win Nelly.'

'Say as you will, it requires some self-denial to give up such fair prospects as I had, and take to plodding and quill-driving with no very definite notions of any reward. Old Stanley—Nelly's father—would only say that, if through my own unaided efforts, I should win a good position in the mercantile world, he would not refuse me when I asked for his daughter. In the meanwhile, I was allowed free communication with my beloved, and we were both young enough to wait a few years; for I was only twenty when we first met, and she was twelve months younger.

'For three years, I toiled like a galley-slave in my new vocation. Old Stanley smiled approvingly, and advanced me fairly enough; but still there was an awful hill to climb before I should dare to say a word about claiming Nelly, or, indeed, before circumstances would permit me to marry without pecuniary aid from her father. My whole capital amounted to L.8000; it was a legacy from a maiden aunt of mine; and many times during these three probationary years had I been tempted to speculate with it, in the hope of taking fortune by storm, as it were, instead of winning it bit by bit.'

'I cannot fancy you a speculator, Luke,' said I, 'though I always considered you a particularly wide-awake individual. Do you remember your school nick-name, "All Eyes?"'

'To be sure I do; and I deserved it. Still, as you say, I am not naturally speculative. I make the most of things in a regular way of business, but run no needless risks. Above all, I hold that he who endangers a pound more than he actually possesses, commits a breach of the command, "Thou shalt not steal." Yet I have speculated desperately; and it is of my one gambling transaction I am going to speak. I had made such satisfactory progress under old Stanley's tuition, that at length he proposed I should invest my little capital, and become his partner to the amount I have named above. Well do I remember leaving home on the morning of the day on which he made this proposition. As I passed through the gate which led into the little shrubbery—you recollect the place, James, for you spent many a jovial day at our house when we were lads—I was attracted by the beautiful appearance of a hop-vine which twined lightly round a sapling hard by. I had watched its growth, and now, as its flowers trembled in the soft wind, I paused to admire it before I passed on my way. Before I returned in the evening, I had made arrangements for becoming a partner in the great house of Stanley & Co., and my little capital was, I may say, in my hands ready to re-invest.

'Any person would suppose that, under such circumstances, I should be too much absorbed in meditating on my commercial prospects to notice small external objects. But such was not the case. As usual, I was "all eyes;" and when I reached the little shrubbery-gate, I noticed that the plant which, in the morning, looked so beautiful, was now shrunken, and appeared as though scorched and withered. Curious to know the cause, I went immediately to the library, and took down a work which would, I thought, enlighten me. In it I found a description of what is termed the "hop-blight;" and on comparing my own small experience with it, I could scarcely doubt that my favourite plant had been thus suddenly struck with the disease. Still, I was not quite satisfied; so I consulted the gardener, who happened to be at work on the lawn. He shook his head when he saw the vine. "It is the blight, sure enough," said he. "Very few hops will there be this year. It comes in this way, and covers a great extent of country all at once, just as though a flame had passed over it."

"Then, you think," said I, "the crop will be spoiled?"

"Not a bit of doubt of that, sir."

"That will do; thank you. I felt anxious to know what had spoiled my vine so suddenly."

'The man returned to his work, and I, never waiting for dinner, hurried back to town, to purchase every pocket of hops I could lay hold on. It was a desperate game, for I risked every farthing I possessed, *but no more*. Hops were then particularly cheap, for the preceding year had been one of remarkable plenty, and a few hours before I began to buy there was as good a prospect for the coming season. Thanks to my being "all eyes," I was first in the field. I made no confidant—I did not even tell Nelly what I was doing. When old Stanley alluded to the partnership, I quietly requested permission to re-consider the matter. His face told that he deemed me a fool, for his offer was certainly a thing to jump at, and he informed Nelly in my presence, and with a perceptible sneer, that I was considering whether a partnership with him would or would not be advisable. The dear girl herself seemed almost hurt about it; but I whispered to her that she must trust me entirely, and she said no more. Nelly had wonderful faith in my infallibility *then*.' It would have been a great comfort to me to tell her all about that venture of mine, for I grew quite haggard with keeping it to myself. And how I watched that solitary plant! If I saw the least signs of amendment in its appearance, I trembled; and the more the leaves drooped, the more did my spirits rise. I was like a fellow by the sick-bed of one from whom he expects a rich legacy. You see I embarked not only my cash, but all my future prospects in this one venture. If I lost the money, I knew I should be sure to lose Nelly also. The successful speculator is fêted as a shrewd man, and his fellows talk of his talent for business; the unlucky one is stigmatised as a gambler and a madman.

'But my anxieties did not last long. The certainty of a failure in the crop of hops became known, and there was an outcry in the market. Nobody knew where all the hops were gone to. The brewers, calculating on diminished prices, had but few in hand when the blight came, and now they eagerly sought to increase their stock. You will guess how I held back, and then sent in my precious commodity in small quantities, and how my capital was quadrupled by the transaction.'

'I see it all now,' interrupted I; 'you' ——

'Stop, and let me finish. Don't be rude, and spoil my story: it is nearly done. When I had parted with my last parcel of hops, and found myself the possessor of twelve instead of three thousand pounds, I marched boldly into old Stanley's office. "I want to speak to you about the partnership you were good enough to propose," said I.

"So you think of trusting your *fortune* in the concern?"

'I took no notice of the implied taunt, but merely answered: "Not exactly the amount at first proposed." I quite enjoyed the misunderstanding, for I saw he thought I only wished to venture a part of my cash, since he told me very coldly I had better retain the whole, as he should object to having anything to do with such a very trifling matter.

"You are under a mistake, Mr Stanley," I answered. "I wish to add a larger, not a smaller, amount to the capital of the firm. I have nine thousand pounds, the result of my first mercantile venture, to add to the three I possessed a short time back;" and then I told him all. I wish you could have seen the old fellow's face. It was not the money he cared for, after all, but the fact of my having proved myself wide awake. He said—and he could not imagine a greater compliment—"Swinton, you deserve to be *my* son-in-law." I went home with him that day, and after dinner, when Nelly—she had no mother—was going to withdraw, he said: "Take Swinton with you, and fix the wedding-day." And so she did, like a dear, dutiful daughter, as she always was. Old Stanley behaved very handsomely. This pretty home of ours was his wedding-present, and cost more than all my fortune. I need not say now why it is called Hop Villa; and when I tell you that the old vine we lamented the death of, to-day, is a veritable scion of the one which laid the foundation of my happiness, you will not wonder at our regret at losing it.'

'Just one question more before we join the ladies, Swinton. Was this your only gambling transaction?'

'Really and truly, yes. Remember, I ran the risk of losing money to win a home and a bride; and having gained *these*, would I endanger them for money only, think you?'

'True; you need not enlarge upon it. Now, let us go to the mistress of Hop Villa.'

SHADOWS IN A NEW LIGHT.

It is a remark of frequent occurrence, that this—the nineteenth century—is pre-eminently a century of inventions. It is interesting to witness, also, if any new invention be announced, what a vast number of novel applications are made of it, never contemplated by the inventor, and very frequently of such a character as seriously to obscure the merit of the original idea.

Take, for instance, the Electric Telegraph. The grand principle upon which both time and space may be annihilated, is no sooner announced, than in quick succession we hear of electric, magnetic, electro-magnetic, magneto-electric, needle, clock, signal, copying, writing, dotting, and almost every other description of telegraph. An eminent chemist discovers the chemical effects of rays of light upon highly sensitive preparations of nitrate of silver, and from this there springs up Photography, under the various guises of Daguerreotype, Talbotype, collodion (with both wet nurses and dry), albumen, wax-paper, and half-a-dozen other processes. Somebody (we forbear to raise another angry discussion by saying who), a short time ago invented that very interesting instrument the stereoscope, and already we have reflecting, refracting, and prismatic varieties.

Of all modern inventions, however, the progress which Photography has made is without parallel. It seems but yesterday that we were startled by the announcement that by means of the sun a correct chart—we do not call them likenesses—of the human face divine could be executed in about two seconds. When people found that they could thus be immortalised, almost before they could pronounce their own names, half the world rushed to be 'taken off;' and, in truth, the other half speedily prepared to be their executioners. Since that time, the progress of photography has been rapid and unchecked. It is becoming a truly ubiquitous agent, to the uses and applications of which there seems to be absolutely no limit. It is equally at home in portraying the savage grandeur of 'rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,' as in depicting the rippling lake reposing softly in the bosom of the valley at their feet. Nothing comes amiss to it. Mountains and valleys, clouds and sunshine, hills and dales, fields and forests, houses and streets, cathedrals and mosques, ancient monuments and modern palaces, statues and pictures, spots upon the sun, mountains in the moon, telescopic discs of planets, microscopic marvels in animal and vegetable structures, weeds and rocks at the bottom of the sea—there is nothing, in short, that may not be subject to it, and in all it tells us more about the object than a volume of written description. It may truly, therefore, be said to be an agency whose value no man can appraise; and rapid as its progress has been, it is yet but in its infancy, as every month brings to light some new feature, some further step in advance. We propose, in the present article, to give a brief description of an application of this marvellous agency, as interesting and as beautiful as anything connected with photography, and, in an educational point of view, as important as anything which has preceded it—we allude to the exhibition of what are technically termed 'Illuminated Photographs,' or the exhibition of photographs as 'dissolving views.'

When we state that it is possible to exhibit photographs to a large number of spectators at one time, of the extraordinary dimensions of 20 feet in diameter, or covering 400 square feet of surface, brilliantly illuminated, bringing into distinct relief the most delicate and minute details of the photograph, and oftentimes accompanied with such a 'stereoscopic effect' as to be absolutely startling in its illusion, we dare say that we shall excite the surprise, if not the incredulity of many. In order, however, not to tax their faith too heavily, we may state that last winter an exhibition of this nature was given at the Manchester Mechanics' Institution 120 times successively; that crowded audiences assembled on every occasion to witness it, and that, besides affording an immense amount of gratification and instruction during the whole of the winter season, it enriched the funds of that thriving institution, small as was the charge for admission, to the amount of (we speak from memory) some seven or eight hundred pounds.

The mode in which this exhibition is accomplished is briefly as follows: The photographs intended to be exhibited are taken on glass, and are from two and a half to three inches diameter each. They require to be taken with the utmost care, as, unless they are absolutely perfect in all their details, the enormous extent to which they are magnified brings out any imperfection which may exist into most unpleasant prominence.

Perfect photographs being obtained, they are placed behind the condensing lenses of the oxy-hydrogen lantern, when the powerful rays of the oxy-hydrogen lime light—created, as every scientific reader knows, by a ball of lime in a state of intense ignition under the action of mixed oxygen and hydrogen gases—are condensed, as the name implies, by the lenses, upon the photographs, and are then projected, by means of object-glasses, upon a carefully whitened opaque disc, upon which the photograph may be shewn of any size, from twelve to twenty-four feet in diameter. We may add, further, that it is best to use two lanterns, and shew the photographs as 'dissolving views,' by which, as will be seen presently, some most beautiful effects are produced. The advantages of this mode of exhibition are obvious. In the first place, as every feature of a landscape or building is accurately portrayed in a perfect photograph, although of but three inches diameter, yet many of the details, on account of their extreme minuteness, are lost to us. We can easily understand, then, that as the photograph is enlarged, these details are more distinctly brought out; and, therefore, the more we enlarge a photograph—provided it be a good one, to begin with—the more nearly do we approach the truthfulness and reality of nature, and therefore the more interesting and striking it becomes. We need scarcely say that a photograph of some twenty feet in diameter bears an important proportion to the landscape or piece of architecture it represents; whilst, in the case of sculpture, which could never have been exhibited but by this process, the full dimensions of the originals may be obtained, and indeed, if necessary, greatly exceeded.

Another advantage of this mode of exhibiting photographs is, that they may be exhibited before large audiences at the same time. What a powerful auxiliary, then, may not this be destined to become in the business of education! What is more calculated to excite and keep awake the attention, even of the most uninformed, than a true transcript of nature, a faithful picture, which 'nothing extenuates, nor sets down aught in malice,' with every feature brought out into the most distinct and vivid relief by the powerful rays of the oxy-hydrogen lime light. In some of the pictures, this fidelity and distinctness were exemplified in the most striking manner.

Those of our readers residing around Manchester who have seen the 'Library of the Louvre,' the 'Exterior of the Picture-gallery, Florence,' the 'Cloisters of the Church of St Paul at Rome,' will not soon forget the impression produced by the marvellous fidelity and clearness with which every architectural detail was reproduced, from the delicately carved enrichments around the doors, windows, and pillars, down to the very chisel-marks upon the unpolished stone-work; whilst the wonderful perspective which was obtained, presenting all the effect of the stereoscope without its littleness, the *solidity* and *reality* which characterised some of the photographs would almost make us doubt whether the instrument which produced these wonderful effects was not a resuscitated Aladdin's Lamp, which, as in days of old, had brought bodily before our eyes the very building; of which, in truth, a picture only was presented to us, but one, the marvellous truthfulness of which was owing to a light far more potent than that which lit up the dingy old lamp of Aladdin—the light of science.

The exhibition of these photographs as dissolving views adds wonderfully to their beauty and interest. In one series of three views of the 'Campo Santo' at Milan, as the pictures succeeded each other, one gradually fading away while the other gathered form and solidity as it approached from the dim distance, a play of light and shade was produced when the pictures mingled together on the screen—caused by the apparently interminable array of vanishing pillars, and the varied tracery and arches, apparently trembling and struggling for existence—that was almost magical in its effect.

Unquestionably, however, the most important use which has yet been made of this new process, was the exhibition, through the whole of last winter, at the Manchester Mechanics' Institution, of Mr Frith's series of Egyptian photographs. Then for the first time since time was, were the busy multitudes of a large manufacturing district placed face to face with those stupendous monuments, which, for ages past, have reared their everlasting forms on the plains of Upper and Lower Egypt; then for the first time were they made acquainted with the mighty works of the Pharaohs, which have imparted such a weird interest to the solemn old Nile; then, in a word, were they made to feel the *reality* of those words which, from their youth upwards, they had read in their Bible, but the full significance of which they had never before felt.

The most remarkable feature of this series of pictures was the *solidity* and *reality* with which they were invested—which were almost sufficient to cheat the beholder into the belief that, by some optical glamour, he was transported bodily to the mystical banks of the Nile. Now, it is the Great Sphinx staring at him with its stony eyes, with the pyramid of El-Gezeh in the background, laden with the traditions of many ages. Gradually the scene changes; the mountain of masonry recedes from the view, and as it becomes more faint and shadowy, the spectator finds himself in the desert; in the distance is the great pylon of the temple of Luxor, before which are the half-buried and mutilated colossi which in ancient days guarded the approach to the temple. Again a change, and stretched before the spectator are the plains of Upper Egypt, whilst face to face with him are the two stupendous colossal statues of Memnon, gazing at him with those same stony eyes with which, all unmoved, they have witnessed the crumbling of so many empires and the change of so many faiths. Need we say that such pictures as these, presented before large masses of people, and accompanied with a plain but ample verbal description, could not be otherwise than deeply interesting and instructive. Most of us are familiar with these scenes, through the medium of David Roberts's paintings; but whilst we willingly pay them the tribute of our admiration, gratefully remembering the pleasant hours we have spent in studying them, we must admit that they fall short of producing the interest and effect which result from photographs of the same scenes shewn in this manner. Equally beautiful and effective with the exhibition just described is that of sculpture, by this process; indeed, if anything, sculpture is seen to greater advantage even than architectural works. It is a portion of the exhibition, which promises to play a highly important part in diffusing amongst the people an increased knowledge and appreciation of this department of the fine arts; and we see no reason why paintings and engravings may not be photographed and exhibited in the same way, thus placing a gallery of art within the reach of every mechanics' institution in the country. In exhibiting sculpture, a much more effective result is obtained by first throwing upon the screen, with the spare lantern, a disc of blue light. The statue is then exhibited faintly illuminated, just dimly discernible in the distance. Gradually, as the light is increased, the figure seems to gather form, distinctness, and solidity; the disc of blue light slowly dissolves away, until at last nothing is visible but an apparently solid marble figure, which exhibits not only the full proportions and perfect form, but the *roundness* and *solidity* of the original marble; and whilst everything around is involved in darkness, the surface of the marble seems absolutely to glisten with rays of brilliant light. The longer the object is looked at, the stronger does the illusion become, until at last we have a difficulty almost in persuading ourselves that it is not a solid marble statue we are looking at, but merely an exquisite creation of light and shade. Take, for instance, the following appearance of Schlottauer's justly celebrated production, the 'Munich Madonna,' perhaps the best adapted for this peculiar process, of any piece of sculpture which has yet been photographed. A form of chaste and unaffected simplicity and beauty, clad in white drapery, falling to the feet in graceful and classical folds, the hands meekly crossed upon the bosom, the countenance radiant with peaceful and devout expression, crowned as Queen of Heaven, and trampling the serpent—the emblem of Sin—under her feet, is first faintly discernible in the distance. As it gradually grows in distinctness, it appears to approach the spectator, invested with an indescribable and mysterious beauty, imparted to it by the blue medium in which it is enshrined. Slowly the ethereal halo melts away, leaving us in the presence of a form no longer shadowy or indistinct, but one whose supernatural and spiritual beauty seems chiseled in solid marble. A feeling almost of awe falls upon the spectator, and amidst the deep silence, notes of solemn music are heard—for so is the exhibition managed—the halo of blue again descends, and surrounds the statue; its form imperceptibly becomes fainter, its beauty more shadowy and ethereal; the blue radiance becomes more intense; and as the solemn cadence dies away, the last glimpse of the beautiful vision melts from our gaze in a flood of ethereal light. The audience, no longer spell-bound, give utterance to those feelings which this exhibition of the Munich Madonna never fails to awaken in all who witness it—in the rudest and most uninformed, as well as in the most cultivated and refined—shewing that there are touches of nature which 'make the whole world kin.' The statue of Madame Malibran, and, indeed, several others, form equally beautiful and effective objects, when thus exhibited. We have said sufficient, however, to indicate the character, and shew the importance of this new application of photography. We repeat, as an educational agency, as a means of illustration for lectures, it will be invaluable. A few months ago, we saw in the *Athenæum* that Professor C. Piazzi Smyth employed it to exhibit his interesting series of photographs taken on Teneriffe. Another gentleman we know—a large employer of labour, and deeply interested in the education of the working-classes—has fitted up apparatus for exhibiting photographs by this process in the mechanics' institution established by his workpeople, thereby securing for them an unfailing source of interest and instruction. Several large towns have lately taken advantage of the invention, and it is hoped that this notice will make its merits still more widely known and appreciated.

It only remains to mention the names of three parties who have been chiefly instrumental in bringing this application of photography to its present state, and to whom the thanks of all who derive either pleasure or advantage from it are due; namely, Mr Hutchings, the talented secretary of the Manchester Mechanics' Institution, who was one of the first to perceive, and, by his adopting it, to prove its value, in an educational point of view; Mr Dancer, the eminent optician of Manchester, the only maker of apparatus specially adapted to this peculiar exhibition, and who unites to his well-known skill as a maker of scientific apparatus, a love for the sciences which he helps to foster; and Messrs Negretti and Zambra of London, the photographers to the Crystal Palace Company, and the spirited publishers of Mr Frith's Egyptian and Holy Land photographs, who have, at great pains and expense, carefully prepared a large series of photographs, specially for exhibition by this process.

LIFE IN THE RANKS.

If a number of Individual Biographies could make up a History of a Class, we should be in no want of record of Life in the Ranks of the British Army; for from the days of William Cobbett and John Shipp, down to the present time, there has been an almost unceasing flow of them from the Fount of Type. The object of those works, however—almost all of which have been *auto*biographical—has been to exhibit the peculiarities of the persons of whom they treat, in order to thereby establish their claim upon public notice, and not to shew us how the common soldier commonly lives. Nay, if a volume should be written with that express intention, it would probably be as dull as an order-book, and only succeed in strengthening the generally received but false opinion, that soldiers lead a stupid and quite methodical existence, destitute of incident, except in times of war.

Quarter-master Connolly, of the Engineers, has been the first to introduce us, in his present volumes,* to the real 'interiors' of the guard-house and the barrack-room. Many of the social incidents he narrates are coarse, while some are even considerably worse; but those who really wish to be informed of the mode of life of the British private soldier, and who prefer daguerreotypes to fancy pictures, have no right to be squeamish. The purpose of the author has not been to exhibit the defender of his country, as everybody has seen him, on parade, with stock and shako, but in undress and forage-cap; and not so much pipe-clayed as clay-piped.

The materials for these volumes were collected while the quarter-master was compiling his interesting *History of the Royal Sappers and Miners*, and consist of episodes of military-life; or, as we should rather say, of Sapper and Miner life, since he confines his sketches to that corps, and thereby contrives, perhaps, to select the most striking incidents from the most convenient area. If he had taken the more extended field of 'the Line,' it is impossible to say how far back in literature, away from genteel delicacy, we should have found ourselves; as it is, we are again and again transported to the days of Smollett, as in *A Dark Deed*, *He would have her*, and *A Bath at all Hazards*. The humour, to our degenerate ears, sounds a little like horse-play, and the love has a trifle more passion in it than is thought decorous in these censorious times. It would be a curious and not impossible task to apportion to each of the lower classes its relative backward position in respect to polish and delicate manners, and to find the corresponding place for it in some higher rank of a preceding age; but we fear that the result of such an examination would be scarcely favourable to that profession of which it has been said that every member of it is a gentleman.

The purely professional sketches, such as *Pontooning* and *A Night on Sca Fell*, as we anticipated, from previous knowledge of our author, are excellent; but his chief strength lies in detailed and almost microscopic personal description. The picture entitled *Sans Everything*, quite pre-Raphaelesque in its minuteness, contains one secondary figure—that of the military nurse—which neither Defoe nor Dickens might be ashamed to call their own.

'Informed of the existence of an octogenarian, who had served at the siege of Gibraltar, and was mentioned with honour for his gallantry in Heriot's history, I went one evening to discover his residence. I found him in a small room in "The Gardens" at Woolwich, the door of which was opened by a middle-aged woman, who seemed to be well acquainted with the business of life, and her own interests.

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* *The Romance of the Ranks.* By T. W. J. Connolly. Longmans.

"I wish to speak to Mr Campbell," said I.

"Certainly, sir. There he is, snoring as usual," said she, pointing to the corner. "Be seated, if you please, sir," and she brought me a chair from the other end of the room.

'I bowed to the venerable man, but he did not notice my salutation.

"Are you his wife?" I asked, addressing the middle-aged woman.

"Why, yes," she answered, with an air of impudent bashfulness. "I've bin with him about two years now and a little better. I took the old frump for his bits o' goods. He can't last long, and then all will be mine, for he hasn't a friend in the world that cares tuppence for him. To be sure," she added, throwing her eyes round the room with contemptuous dissatisfaction, "the things are not worth much; but they'll do for me to cart away."

'Over the place I cast a hurried glance. The walls were covered with gorgeous coloured pictures, in frames of deal, painted in imitation of oak, bird's-eye maple, and rosewood. On the mantel-shelf was crowded a number of delf-figures and birds, patched with white-lead and blackened by age and smoke. Among them were arranged, with every attention to order, a few pieces of polished rock, a dried monkey's head, and two or three fragments of bone, found in St Michael's Cave, Gibraltar. A small dresser groaned with crockery of all patterns and colours, from a bread-pan to an egg-cup, and of all ages, from the plate of yesterday to the cracked saucer used when old Campbell's grandmother was in long clothes. In a word, the accumulated rubbish of a half-century and more was crushed into the domicile—a space little more than twelve feet square.

"Why do you talk so strangely in the presence of your husband?" inquired I.

"Oh," she exclaimed, smiling, accidentally shewing how poorly she was provided with masticators, "it's o' no consequence. He's as deaf as a gravestone, sir, and dumb as a rock. He only speaks when he wants his pipe, or summat to eat."

'So I was inclined to believe, for the aged man looked vacantly in one direction, and snored spasmodically, as if his nostrils were stuffed with muzzle-stoppers.

"Is he asleep?"

"As much awake as you are. For all that, he can't tell the blaze of a torch from the flame of a rushlight. So you see, sir, I have it all my own way. It's no joke, however, to wait on an old blind fool like that. It was throwing myself away to take him," added the harpy; "but it gave me a home, bad as it is."

"To say the best, your connection with Mr Campbell is anything but creditable."

"Lor', sir, it was simple enough, if not pious. I was a widder, and wanted a home; the old goose there was feeble, and wanted a nuss. He was better then than he is now—more of a man, sir. We both attained our aims without the clergy. What use would the parson ha' been in such a case? And I'm sure I attend him better than most people would."

"You are not married, then?"

"Married!" shouted the middle-aged woman, utterly surprised at my asking so insane a question. "Do you think I would do such a thing?" and she uttered the interrogatory as if she regarded herself a decided catch for any widower about her own age. "Get tied up to an old feller like that, who can't hear the proof-guns fire in the Arsenal, or smell a slow-match if you was to burn it under his nose! Why, sir, do you know he's between eighty and ninety? Married to him! It's not his fault that he's infirm and stupid; but it would have bin mine had I taken such a lot o' goods for better or wuss."

'Here the middle-aged woman, at the bare thought of my fancying she was virtuous enough to be the wife of the invalid, laughed immoderately; and she shook so violently with the fit, that the rumpled borders of her begrimed cap flew about her high-coloured face like the canvas of a sloop-of-war tacking in a gale.

'She was a hardened wretch; and thinking it full time to drop the conversation, I turned to the Gibraltarian.

'He was bolstered up in a wooden high-backed elbow-chair, polished by wear. To ease his seat, it had a chintz-covered pad. More than six feet was his height, and his long gaunt face, made up of bags, seams, and long straggling grizzly whiskers, bespoke the gravity of his years. His mouth was drawn aside by some paralytic affection, and his lower jaw fell on his breast, exhibiting a chasm, looking, for all the world, like the grim model of a breached stockade. His gray hair, hanging in hanks from his head, served as cushions to prevent his shoulder-blades being rubbed; while the crown of his old cranium was warmed with a crust which it would have taken no end of soap and scrubbing to remove. His dim pea-green eyes, driven back into their deep sockets, were partially shrouded by a pair of shaggy brows, jutting out like *chevaux de frise;* and the under-lids, which at some remote period assisted to protect his worn-out orbs, dropped into the cavities formed above his pointed cheek-bones. A strange feature was his nose. Thin, crooked in and out by accident or wounds, and expanded at the end like a trumpet, it seemed as if it had supplanted an incompetent mouth in the office of speaking. His legs were cased in thick-ribbed Scotch stockings, reaching above his knees; his feet, pushed into a pair of old boots with the backs cut away, rested on a fragment of quilted blanket; and his poor wasted frame was only covered by a striped buttonless shirt, as if the pressure of anything heavier was likely to crush in his ribs. By his side, on a small deal-table, was a basin of hot gruel with an iron spoon in it, and a couple of pinches of salt on a bit of paper were near it, waiting the pleasure of that bag o' bones to devour the humble repast. The middle-aged woman could have supplied a salt-cellar and a better spoon; but there was the chance of the one being broken and the other spoiled, which, no doubt, were all-sufficient reasons for withholding them.

'All this time, Campbell was ignorant of my presence; and when I approached him, he had his eyes fixed in the same direction, staring with unaltered vacancy.

"How d'ye do?" said I.

'No answer.

"You must speak much louder," suggested the old nurse. "Bawl, sir, if you please. When I first took him in hand, I was hoarse for a month roarin' at him. Speak *much* louder, sir."

'After clearing my throat, I repeated the friendly interrogatory in as loud a voice as I could command.

'No reply.

"Let *me* speak to the *object*," interposed the middle-aged woman. "He can hear me when he can't a pistol-shot. What d'ye wish me to say to the old buffer?"

'I told the coarse creature my purpose, and she shouted into the ear of the statue the several questions I proposed. Her voice was so shrill it might have been heard across a common.

"Did you serve at Gibraltar?" asked she, with her mouth close to the ear of the invalid, first applying a mild slap of her open hand to his shoulder, to restore him to consciousness.

"Ay!" ejaculated the Gibraltarian, gently inclining his ear to listen, and dropping his jaw as if it were no more use to him than a plumb-bob.

"Did you serve at Gibraltar?"

"No."

"Yes, you did," said she, chidingly, patting his parchment cheek with hypocritical endearment.

"O yes, so I did," he rejoined, evidently aroused by the coaxing touch of the nurse.

"Were you ever in the artillery?"

"In what?"

"The artillery."

"'Tillery?" He apparently struggled to catch even these few syllables of the brief question.

"No, I wasn't; was I?"

"Yes, you stupid." Of course, the latter part of the reply was delivered in a subdued tone, and then she added, addressing me: "You see, sir, I'm obliged to humour the dear old man."

'The patriarch tried to recollect.

"O yes," he drawled out, "I was in the 'Tillery."

"Were you at the siege of Gibraltar?"

"At the siege?" Up went the ear again, and from the length of it, it was a wonder he did not hear every sound like thunder.

"Yes, at the siege."

"Was I?" he asked.

"Certainly you were," shouted the middle-aged woman.

"Of course I was," bawled the invalid.

"What about the Spanish baron?"

"What baron?"

"He whom you saved at the sortie?"

"At what?" mumbled the veteran.

"The sortie! you old dunce."

"When?"

"In 1781."

"Seventeen—eighty—one!" and the lower jaw, after the effort necessary to utter the words, wagged for a few seconds involuntarily; while the breath from his nostrils, between the snorts which exhaustion had produced, rolled out in clouds like steam from a glass of hot grog.

"Don't you understand me?"

'He did not understand; but, hearing a noise in his ear, muttered something that could not be interpreted.

'The middle-aged woman repeated the question.

"O yes—yes—yes," returned the veteran, and then was silent.

'Two or three other attempts were made to elicit information from him, but his indistinct replies were simply echoes to the questions put to him. Seeing that the task of gleaning any particulars in this quarter was impossible, I rose from my seat, took the old man's hand, and bade him "good-bye."

"Ay?" ejaculated he, reviving with the touch; and regaining in a measure his speech, added: "God bless you, sir! Will you give me a bit o' backer?"

"I never smoke," said I, smiling. The middle-aged woman was bursting with laughter.

"Then give me a penny to buy some!"

'No sooner the word than the blow. Not prepared to find the patriarch so alive to his wants, I was a little surprised, modest as was his request, to hear him ask for the luxury in an unhesitating and peremptory tone. Too glad, in this way, to assist his necessities, I gave him a trifle; and with a disapproving look at the harridan, who returned it with a coquettish leer, I passed from the chamber of the octogenarian.

'A fortnight later, calling to inquire whether the aged invalid was short of tobacco, I learned he was in his grave, and that the middle-aged nurse had decamped with his "bits o' things."'

This grim, unsparing sort of description is Quartermaster Connolly's favourite as well as special talent, and *Downwards* and *The Garrison Calcraft*, afford two out of many terrible specimens of his sombre art.

The real incidents for story which lay at the author's hand were indeed so numerous, as to make professional *littérateurs*, like ourselves, gnash our teeth with envy. This profuse person knows so little of the value and scarcity of his raw material, that he disposes of a really striking situation in a paragraph, and constructs 'an anecdote' out of what would serve some of us for a three-volume novel. Nor is this embarrassment of wealth so much to be wondered at, when we read that in the ranks of the Sappers—a comparatively small corps—all professions, from that of the lawyer to that of the policeman, have their representatives, and all trades, from the organ-builder to the mouse-trap maker. During the eighty years that it has existed, it has borne upon its muster-roll clergymen and dissenting ministers, cashiered officers, used-up baronets, broken-down stockbrokers and barristers, ventriloquists, actors, and even one magician and prophet; nay, 'in 1848, one James Gordon, late a private of the corps, succeeded, as heir of his grandfather, to the titles of Viscount Kenmure and Lord of Lochiuvar.'

A BLIND MAN'S THOUGHTS.

I LITTLE knew the worth of sight
Before my lamp was snatched away;
Ah, had I garnered up the light,
My mind had not been dark to-day!
Had coming eve foreshadowed thought,
How precious, then, would morn have been;
Alas, I saw not what I ought,
And saw what I should not have seen!

The blow descended as I slept,
I woke, unconscious of my doom,
While morning unsuspected crept
With stealthy footsteps round my room;
But when the dawn had passed away,
Th' unwonted merry call of some
Who came to tell me it was day,
Told me—my polar night was come.

It died—that first bewild'ring pain;
But rapid mem'ry, ne'er at rest,
Marshals a long and mournful train
Of dead enjoyments once possessed;
So to the minds of drowning men,
When past the anguish and the strife,
One flashing moment shews again
Each letter of the page of life.

Yet would I not complain; I feel
Some pleasures are obscured by light,
As darkness can alone reveal
The solitary orbs of night:
The flowers unseen yield sweeter scent;
The touch of love is prized the more;
And woman's silvery voice is blent
With music never heard before.

Yea, though I tread the vale of night,
I fear no ill, for He is there
Who with the rod of pain to smite
Has given the staff of strength to bear
And thus, with darkened steps and slow,
Yet led by faith, I venture on
So close to Him who deals the blow,
That half its heavy weight is gone.

R. R.

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ENGLAND FROM THE CAFFRE POINT OF VIEW.

OTHELLO, in his 'traveller's history,' told of antres vast and desarts idle, of rocks and hills whose heads touch heaven, of cannibals that eat each other, and, most strange of all, of men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders. When an uncivilised barbarian is taken from his native wilderness to some crowded centre of civilisation, and is afterwards sent back to his former companions, he has more wonderful things to speak of in *his* 'traveller's history,' than Othello could find for the gentle Desdemona's ear. A short time since, a very curious and notable illustration of this occurred in the colony of Natal. A party of native Zulus had been conveyed to England, to exhibit their barbarous costume, and to dance their grotesque war-dances, before their wondering white-skinned brethren of the north. After they had completed their engagement, and filled the pockets of the speculator who was at the cost of their expedition, they were, most of them, sent back home, in accordance with a colonial law, which requires that no native shall be removed from the colony without being deposited upon his own shores within a specified time. One of the adventurers, a shrewd young Zulu, made good use of his eyes while he was upon his travels; and, on a particular occasion, was induced to give a narrative of the most remarkable things he had seen, to a party of graybeards and chiefs who were gathered round him, to hear what he had to say, and who were curious to know, from the testimony of an eye-witness of their own race, how far the reports of the greatness of the English nation were worthy of belief.

The old men and chiefs were gathered in a circle, squatting upon the ground, with their keen curiosity hidden beneath that dignified look of imperturbable indifference which magnates of barbarian races deem it essential to their important positions to assume. Upon this occasion there was also perceptible, every now and then, a glance of unmistakable incredulity. The young man, who had been made 'older than his elders,' by far travel, sat in the midst of the circle, and thus began his narrative[*]:

Going on the sea was a hard thing for us to do; but we said, we will try; others have gone, and gone safely. Shall we have a different fate, because we are black? At first, the ship went well enough; soon it began to lean from side to side, and it felt loose in the water, so that we said it will fall over; we saw no reason why it should remain upright. Presently, we became very sick, and could eat nothing, and we thought we should die; our hearts turned behind us, and we lamented for our friends. At length, however, we found ourselves recovering, and the ship still keeping its right position, so that we said, all may yet go well with us. We reached Cape Town, and thought that a great place, until we had seen the towns of England. After leaving Cape Town, we lost sight of the land; and we said to ourselves, how can the ship find its way without a path—before, behind, and on every side is nothing but sea? We here thought we must all die in this waste together, and began to bewail our state; but the white men laughed at us, and told us that they saw their way in the sky. We hoped this might be true; but we could not see a path there. Then we said, if we die, these men will die too. Surely, they do not laugh and joke when they are going to die. The thought of this gave us hope. One day the captain of the ship told us we should see land on the morrow, and that would shew us that he knew where he was. Sure enough, the next day we did see land, and our bodies melted into comfort. This land, however, was not England; it was an island in the sea. We did not reach England until the third moon.

We were then told that we were in the mouth of a great river, and soon after that London was before us. Our eyes could not see London, though. We saw only a great cloud of smoke, and poles standing out of the water like reeds in a marsh. We went in among the poles, and found that they were the masts of ships; and then our ship stood still.

This London is the great place of the English, and it is indeed a *great* place. *We* never saw the end of it; we tried hard to find the end, but could not. We climbed a very high building, formed like a pole, to look for it; but our sight was still filled with streets, and houses, and people. We then heard that there were many people who had been born there, and had grown old there, and yet had never seen the end; so we said, if this be so, why should we who are strangers look for the end. We will give up the search.

The people in London are so many that they tread upon one another; all day and all night the streets are filled with a crowd. At first, we thought some great thing had happened, and said, let us wait till the people have passed on; but they never did pass. The surface of the earth is too small to hold the people, and some of them live under the ground, and some even under the water. The London river is as broad as one part of the Bay of Natal; over this the English have built a bridge which people and wagons can cross upon: there are also boats by which you can get over the water. But there is further a passage cut under the river, through which people and wagons can go to the other side without knowing that they have passed water at all, and in which people live. This passage under the water is not dark; fire gives light. I do not know why the people should have made a passage under the water, when there were good and ready roads above it, and plenty of boats. I believe they made it only because they wished to have it so.

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[*] This narrative is taken from the actual words of a young Zulu, who returned to Natal after spending a twelvemonth in England and other civilised countries; it has reached us from a source which places its authenticity beyond question.

Besides the crowd in the streets and on the land, the water is covered with large and small ships, all filled with people going backward and forward, up and down. These people live on the water because there is no room for them on the land. When I saw the crowd of the English, I was glad that England was not joined on to our land, for if it were, the crowd would come here and trample us all into the earth with their boots.

The houses in London are so tall that they shade the streets from the sun until mid-day. The spirits of the place live in some of the highest buildings, in places where men never go. They utter a wailing sound by day and by night, which we often heard.

There is no country in the land; there is no room for wild-grass to grow. If the grass were not fenced in like a melie-ground, it would all be trodden down. I went to many parts of England, away from London, but I saw nothing but houses and fences. There is no place anywhere more open than the great Umgungundhlovi (Maritzburg, the capital of Natal). A man in that land can never be alone.

When I went about in England, I travelled in a wagon drawn by another wagon; and I moved so fast, that my eyes were puzzled. If you were to start from this place, in the same way, at daylight in the summer-time, and were to go to the Bay of Natal (fifty miles off), you could be back again soon after sunrise. In that land, when you want to go quickly, you do not ride upon a horse, as people do here; you take the horse with you into the wagon, and he feeds as he goes along. The wagon moves so fast, that your horse cannot keep up with it, so you must take him into the wagon. One wagon draws a great many others—I never could make out how. It is a large kettle on wheels, full of water, with a fire under it to make it boil. Before the water boils, many loaded wagons are tied on behind, for the moment the water boils, the kettle on wheels runs away upon its own road. If the water were to boil without the wagons being fastened to the kettle, I do not know where it would run to. These wagons have straight, level roads of their own, upon which nothing else comes. Valleys are built up, and hills bored through, to make the road, and strips of iron are put into the ground to keep it tight. People who go in the wagons often find themselves in the dark, amidst sparks, and in a dreadful noise, rushing along under the hills.

We saw very few oxen in London, and yet there is plenty of beef. The cows give a great deal of milk; they are kept in stables, and fed there like horses. One cow there gives as much milk as a kraalful would here. The milk runs until the milker is tired. The cows have better houses in England than the white chiefs have in Natal; but they never see the sun. The oxen are brought into London from a great distance in wagons, feeding all the way. The wagons are drawn by a hot-water wagon. In England, oxen ride in the wagons instead of drawing them. We saw herds of oxen coming into London dragged along over the tops of the houses, because there was no room for them any other way.

Money is made in London; people there hardly care to look at it. Rich men are obliged to build big houses to keep their money in. We saw many big houses in London built for nothing else but to hold money. Many people in London are very rich, but there are many, too, that are very poor. The place is so large, that there must be all sorts of men.

The English people never take any notice of one another; they noticed us because we were black. They were at war with the Ama Rusi when we were in the land; but when they are at war, they never allow any fighting in their own country. Whenever they fight, they go out to meet the enemy in his own place. But the war makes no difference to the people. They never care about it, because they know they will beat. It is only the soldiers who go out to fight. We saw the soldiers entering the ships to go out to fight; we saw, too, ships that had been taken from the Ama Rusi brought in.

We saw many very odd things in London—things that we could not at all understand. I saw more than I can tell you, and yet I saw nothing. Some of the party who went with me over the sea stayed behind, because they had not seen enough, and wished to see more. I, with my own eyes, saw men mount into the sky, and go higher than the eagle; they went up, not with wings, but in a basket, which was tied to a large round bag filled with smoke. The bag looked like a big calabash, with the mouth downward, and the basket hanging under it. There were two people sitting in the basket, and the bag was let go, and took them up. I looked at it until my eyes were tired, and it had become smaller than a bird. They flung sand down upon the people beneath; some fell upon me. They went up, because they had some work there to do; but I do not know what it was.

I saw dogs carry letters, and monkeys fire off guns; I saw a horse dance to a drum, and make a bow to the people who looked at him; I saw elephants, and crocodiles, and tigers, and sea-cows, living in houses; I saw a big snake coil himself round a man, and put his head into the man's mouth, and untwist himself when he was ordered to do so; I saw men stand on their heads, and walk on their hands, for money, and I paid my own money to see them do it. When we went to England, we thought all we had heard of the white men was made too big; when we saw for ourselves, we said that all was nothing that we had heard before.

We saw many things that were very good; but we saw one thing which we did not like, and which frightened us. The English people make ready places to bury themselves in when they die. But they don't want to bury more than they can help, because the ground is but small; so they take some persons when they are dead to doctoring-houses, and cut them up and dry them there. When a man dies in the streets—and many do so, because the streets are always full—if he has no brother or friend, he is taken to a house, and papers are put out to ask who he is. If no one claims him, he is next sent to a doctoring-house, and there, if the doctors like, they cut him open, and look into him, and find out why he died. The doctors in England learn to cure the sick by looking into dead men. The doctors there like dead men; and we were told of people who will even steal them out of their graves. When one of our party died, he was only buried because we were there. We heard afterwards that he was taken out of his grave again, and cut up to see if he was made like white men. We were once taken to the door of a doctoring-house, and when we were at the door, we saw dead men standing up as if they were alive, and so we were afraid to go in. This cutting up of dead people looks very much as if they knew how to 'takata' (use witchcraft), and perhaps they do, for the doctors in England know everything.

The people in England are like grass for number; but the food is more abundant than the people. At first, we thought, 'where shall we get food, when there are so many people of the country to eat it themselves?' We did not see it growing, nor where it could grow. Yet a man can fill himself there for sixpence, much better than here, and, indeed, have more than he can eat. We afterwards learned that money was used to bring in the food of other countries. There is plenty of *umbila* (Indian corn) in England, but we never looked at it. We ate bread and drank beer. We only liked umbila again after we returned home.

We saw the great houses where clothes and iron things were made; we saw, too, the people who make them, and so found out that it is not true, as we have always heard here, that these things are made by a race of people with only one eye. We went to the house where the money is made, but there was a soldier at the door who would not let us go in. We, however, heard them making the money very fast from where we stood.

Now, although I have told you so much, yet I have told you nothing; I was but just beginning to see, myself, when I came away. When I went from this country, I thought the blacks were beyond the white people in number; now I have seen for myself that there are no black people at all. Men here say that the whites are but few; it is only because they have not yet come. If they were all here, they would dig down the mountains, and build up the valleys, and we should be like dogs on a flat howling for their homes. We know no work; they can work for themselves. There is nothing that they cannot do. You here have believed that you were strong, when you were nothing. It would put an end to many false thoughts if every chief in Natal could be taken to see England.

With this shrewd remark, the young traveller made an end of his tale. A grave and significant silence of some minutes ensued, and the patriarch of the party then, looking up from his reverie, remarked: 'Young man, we thank you for your news. You have made us older than we were, but you are still older yourself; you have seen with your eyes what we only hear with our ears. Eyes are more to be relied upon than ears, and it would be well to see as well as hear, as you say. But what old man would cross the sea!'

THE ANATOMY OF TIME.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

THE word *Time*, by etymology, signifies a *cut*, a portion *cut* off; the primary root of it being the same as that which shews itself in the words *anatomy*, a cutting up; *atom*, that which cannot be cut, and in several others.

In such, for the most part, the idea of *cutting* is easily enough to be recognised; but what connection is to be discovered between cutting and that which we call *Time?* This: eternity, in very early ages, was figured by a circle, as having neither beginning nor end; and time, which has had the one, and will have the other, was considered as a segment cut from that circle—as if it had been said: You may turn a hoop round and round for ever without finding an extremity to it; but take a cut out of it, and in that cut you have two extremities forthwith.

But time itself is cut into various divisions; it is of these divisions that, chiefly, we are about to treat; and hence the title of our article. We call them the *measures* of time; and with us they are years, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, and seconds. Let us consider whence they have originated, and what properly they are.

It is to be observed, in the first place, that these measures may be divided into natural measures and arbitrary measures. The natural arise from physical phenomena, and are the day and the year; the former being that lapse of time in which the earth rotates once round its own axis; the latter, that in which it revolves once round the sun. All other measures of time are arbitrary; that is to say, it is not by any physical facts that they are determined. There is no such fact, for instance, to serve as any ground for our dividing the day into twenty-four hours rather than into twenty hours, or into any other number of hours.

Beginning, then, with the two natural divisions of time, we have to note this distinction between them: that the one, namely, the day, is a comparatively obvious division; while the other, the year, is far from being so. While the alternations of light and darkness determine, at least in a rough way, the former, it is in a much rougher way that the latter is determined by the succession of the seasons; and as regards precise measurements, while by means of the sand-glass or the clepsydra, or other mechanical instruments, a tolerably exact measure was easily enough found from noon to noon, it was only when and where astronomical science had reached a high state of development, that the exact measure from vernal equinox to vernal equinox could be settled. Even when it was settled, it was not always at once acted upon. In this country, for instance, it was only in 1752, little more than a century ago, that the 'new style,' as it was called, became the legal style, though Pope Gregory XIII. had reformed the Roman calendar so long previously as 1582. The corrected calendar, indeed, has not even yet been universally adopted: in Russia, for example, and wherever the influence of the Greek religion prevails, the old style is maintained to this day. This is why we sometimes see in the newspapers that the dates of intelligence from Russia or Greece are double. In the books of those countries they are often printed the one above the other, as thus, $\frac{24\text{ Oct.}}{5\text{ Nov.}}$ Battle of Inkermann. The error of the old style, we may mention here, arose from the year being computed as consisting of 365 days, 6 hours, exactly, instead of 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 50 seconds; and it had been going on accumulating since 45 B.C., at which date Julius Cæsar established the year called after him the Julian year. That year was a great improvement, so far as it went; for, previously, a discretionary power as to the year had been left to the Pontifex Maximus, who frequently abused it for political purposes; so that all had become confusion. But it did not go far enough, and the neglect of minutes and seconds had gradually involved a miscalculation amounting to days. The error, when the change was made in this country, amounted to eleven days; and the rectification of it was accomplished in the year mentioned above, by the 3d of September being counted the 14th of that month. Not, indeed, without considerable clamour from the ignorant, who felt as if actually deprived of a portion of their appointed time. 'Give us back the eleven days we have been robbed of,' was a popular election-cry in Oxfordshire; and an illness which befell Bradley, the astronomer-royal, who had advised the ministers of the crown on the measure, was widely regarded as a punishment for his having done so.

We have said that the day is a comparatively obvious division of time; it is not, however, so obvious a one as might at first sight be supposed. A race of men who had sunk into the savage state would not easily, on re-emerging from it, arrive at the conclusion that, from one noon to another, the times are always equal.[*] Nay, they would be apt to believe the contrary: the weary nights of winter—supposing them placed in the temperate zone—contrasting with the pleasantly passing summer-days, would surely lead them to believe, that from noon to noon in the cold season, was much longer than from noon to noon in the warm. They have no clocks to shew the real fact. The only time-measure they have is the distance they can travel between noon and noon; and it will be long indeed before they recognise and apply even this rude measure. But further, they have at first no idea of noon at all; they do not know that the sun will always be, at the same time every day, in the same line of the sky; and further still, supposing them to have at last reached so far—after long-continued observation of some natural dial, the shadow, we shall say, cast by the top of a great rock—they still do not know that noon is equidistant between sunrise and sunset. If any reader doubt the difficulties we here hint at, let us ask him to suppose himself suddenly called upon to explain and prove to such a tribe what a day really is. It would task his ingenuity, we suspect, and we should like to hear the lecture he would deliver. For he is to be allowed no instrument of any kind; no time-piece, and no compass—the use of such mysterious things being altogether unknown to his auditors; nor is he to help himself by employing any such terms as 'day' or 'hour,' seeing that, familiar indeed as those terms are to *him*, they are but *terms* for the very things the *nature* of which he is to demonstrate and make plain to a people altogether ignorant of it.

So much for the *abstract* day: let us now consider the days of the week as they are known to us by their English names; and in doing so, let us compare those names with those assigned to them in one or two other languages.

The first is the day of the Sun, Sunday. So also it is in Latin,[†] and in German; being *Dies Solis* in the one, *Sonntag* in the other. But not so is it in French; those, our neighbours, call it *Dimanche*. Dimanche?—a curious-looking word, especially as *manche* means a *sleeve*, and is also the name given to the English Channel. Yet the French give a better name to the day than the Germans and we do; unwittingly, indeed, for the most part, and little thinking, when they make *Dimanche* their day, not of rest, but of exhausting pleasures, that the etymological signification of the word is *the Lord's Day*. So it is, however; *Dimanche* is a corrupt contraction of the Christian Latin, *Dies Dominicus*.

Monday is the day of the Moon, *Montag*, *Dies Lunæ*, *Lundi*, and we have no more to say of it. Tuesday is the day of Tys, Tiu, or Tuisco, the god of war in the old German mythology, and so corresponding to the Mars of the Romans; whence, in Latin, Tuesday is *Dies Martis*, and in French *Mardi*. The modern Germans, however, call it *Dienstag*, which their etymologists derive from the old word *Ting*, signifying a council, because it was on Tuesdays that their councils met, to deliberate, or *think*. The words *Ting* and *think* are, indeed, evidently cognate; but another cousin of *Ting* still survives in our language, and is very frequently heard of without his relationship being suspected; the *hustings* on which candidates appear at an election are, by derivation, nothing else or less than the *hus-tings*, or *ting's house*.

Wednesday is the day of Woden, or Odin, the chief deity of the Germans (their supreme Allvadur, or Father of All, being, of course, excepted), and undoubtedly the same as the oriental Buddha. Here, again, the old name has been preserved in English, while the Germans have lost it—they being now content to call Wednesday by the simple name of *Mittwoche*, signifying that it is the middle day of the week. In French it is *Mercredi*, from the Latin *Dies Mercurii*, the day of Mercury. Thursday is the day of Thor, corresponding in some respects to the Jupiter of the Romans, whence in Latin it is *Dies Jovis*, and in French, *Jeudi*. The Germans call it, after the thunder, instead of the thunderer, *Donnerstag*. Friday is the day of Freya, the German Venus; whence, in German, it is called *Freitag*, and in French, from the Latin, *Vendredi*. Saturday is the day of Seater, or Saturn: in Latin it is *Dies Saturni*, and in French, *Samedi*, which may be a corruption of the other: the Germans, generally, now call it *Sonnabend*—that is to say, Sunday-eve; but in some parts of Germany it is still called *Satertag*.

Coming now to the other natural division of time, namely, the year, we shall consider, in the first place, how we correct the error which would arise if we counted it as consisting of 365 days exactly. The first correction is made by our counting 366 days in every fourth year—every leap-year, as we call it—by adding a day to the month of February; and this simple correction, it is obvious, would be sufficient, if the year consisted of 365 days and a quarter exactly. But, as we have already said, the year consists, not of 365 days 6 hours exactly, but only of 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 50 seconds;[*] and this difference of 11 minutes 10 seconds, small as it is, requires to be provided for, unless at future periods our descendants are to take, again and again, such jumps as that taken by our ancestors in 1752, and pass over several whole days at a time. Accordingly, the following rule has been prescribed: *Although leap-year falls on all centesimal years, such as* 1800, 1900, 2000, *and so on, such years shall not be counted leap-years, unless the number of centuries be divisible by four.* And the working of this rule may thus be stated shortly:

If the year contained 365 days 6 hours exactly, leap-year would keep all right:

But the year is 11 minutes 10 seconds less than this, so that, in one hundred years, we should be 1110 minutes (11' 10" × 100) in advance of the proper time:

Consequently, every centesimal year we omit to count a leap-year, thereby subtracting a day, or 1440 minutes:

But this, again, is striking out too much by 330 minutes (1440—1110) in the century:

Wherefore, once in four hundred years, we are to let the centesimal leap-year stand, and be counted as such—namely, when the number of the centuries is divisible by four—thereby, in four hundred years, adding 1440 minutes.

Such is the rule. It is plain, however, that as, in the last correction, we had only 1320 minutes (4 × 330) to add, in order to make our reckoning exact, we shall, after all, be more than an hour and a half wrong in the twenty-second century. This will make an error amounting to a day, in some five thousand years hence—if the world last so long. But our posterity must look to it: we really do as much for them, in this way, as can reasonably be expected of us.

Having thus considered the *duration* of the year, we next come to consider at what point of time each year is made to take its beginning.

Now, it is to be observed, that though the year, as a measure of time, is a natural division, it is by an altogether arbitrary arrangement that we have chosen to make it begin when we do. If we had chosen the summer or winter solstice, or the vernal or autumnal equinox, our choice would have had a philosophical foundation; but it was one of mere convention when we fixed upon the 1st of January. Our conventional beginning, too, is comparatively of very recent date; up to the year 1752, the year in England began on the 25th of March, being Annunciation Day. This applies, however, only to the civil, and not to the historical year—the latter having all along been reckoned from the 1st of January. Nevertheless, historical mistakes in dates may, and, indeed, do frequently occur from neglecting to allow for the change. Thus, for instance, when we speak of the 'Glorious Revolution of 1688,' it is erroneously that we do so; for although the act of convention, or parliament, which accomplished the Revolution, passed in what was the month of February 'eighty-*eight* at that time, it is evident that after putting back the beginning of the year to the 1st of January, we should count, now, that important February as having belonged to 'eighty-*nine*. An amusing example of this mistake is afforded by a chronological table now before us. It was published in 1791; professes to give the 'Remarkable Events, Inventions, and Discoveries' from the creation up to that date; and contains the following information with regard to 1688:

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[*] Strictly speaking, they are not always exactly equal; but we do not aim here at *scientific* accuracy.

[†] Since the time of Theodosius I.

[*] More exactly, 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 49·62 seconds, or 365·242241 days.

1688.

Nov. 5. The Revolution in Great Britain begins.
Dec. 3. King James abdicates, and retires to France.
Feb. 16. King William and Queen Mary, daughter and son-in-law to James, are proclaimed.

As if William and Mary had begun to reign nearly ten months before James II. had fled the country.

In connection with the year, it now only remains for us to speak of the era or the point from which we begin to reckon—not the individual year, but our series of years. This, which is necessarily an arbitrary point, is, with all Christian nations, the year in which Jesus Christ was born; hence the letters A.D. for *Anno Domini*, in the year of the Lord; and according to the common reckoning, we are now in the year 1859. The best chronologers, however, are agreed in holding that the era has been erroneously fixed—it was only fixed in the sixth century, and by an abbot of Rome—and we are told that the true year of Christ's birth was four, or, as some say, five years earlier than that thus assigned to it; so that we should count the current year as 1863 or 1864. To rectify this now, however, would be worse than useless. As to non-Christian peoples, the Jews, among themselves at least, reckon from the creation; and the present year, according to the version they adopt, is 5620. The ancient Jews, we may remark in passing, reckoned very variously, dating sometimes from the Creation, sometimes from the Flood, sometimes from the Exodus, sometimes from the building of the Temple, sometimes from the Babylonian Captivity. All the Mohammedan nations date from the Hegira, or the flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina on the 16th of July 622. Their year 1275 will begin on the 1st of August of this year; and the apparent discrepancy which will doubtless be remarked here, is explained by the fact, that they reckon by years of twelve lunar synodical months, so that they are always getting in advance as to the number of the years they count by their system, besides having the beginning of their year, notwithstanding some intercalary days they use, constantly shifting through the seasons.

The only other epochs which need detain us are those which were employed by the Greeks and the Romans; but these deserve some attention, for it is well to know how the chronology of Greek and Roman history is to be reduced to ours. The Greeks, then, reckoned by Olympiads, or the periods of four years each which elapsed between the stated celebrations of the Olympic games. Let an example serve and suffice to shew how a date given in Olympiads is to be brought into our chronology. Xerxes began his great expedition against Greece in the third year of the seventy-fourth Olympiad. Seventy-three complete Olympiads of four years each, or 292 years, together with two years of the seventy-fourth, had thus elapsed from the date assigned to the first Olympiad, namely, 776 B.C. Subtract, therefore, 294 from 776; this gives 482; and as the invasion took place in the *third* year of the seventy-fourth Olympiad, we find the date of it to be 481 B.C.*

The Romans, again, reckoned from the date which they assigned to the foundation of Rome, namely, 753 B.C.; hence the letters A.U.C., these being the initials of *ab urbe condita*, meaning 'from the foundation of the city.' Consequently, to find what year in our chronology answers to a date given A.U.C., we have simply to subtract that date from 753, if it is less than that number, or to subtract 753 from it, if it is greater. Thus, for an example of the former case: the Romans would have said that the Carthaginians under Hannibal entered Italy 535 A.U.C.; this, subtracted from 753, gives 218, which is the date B.C. of the Punic invasion. And thus, for the other case, the Romans would have dated the capture of Jerusalem by Titus as having taken place 823 A.U.C.; subtracting 753 from which date, we have the date 70 A.D.

In an ensuing paper, we shall consider the purely arbitrary divisions of time.

THE OAKS OF FAIRHOLME.

I WONDER whether it would be possible for me to write down the curious experiences of my youth. I am not old now, though more than thirty years have passed since I first saw the light shining on the upper windows of the house of which I am now the mistress. The sun as it sunk in the west always lit them up, before my father's great barn hid the view of the old Hall from us.

Most people thought Fairholme a dull place, but I remember liking it very much when I was a child. The squire was a tall, dignified man, not very popular with his tenantry. He came down only for a few months in the year; during the remainder, the house was shut up. It was said that, when younger, he had a pleasanter manner, and that it was the want of an heir to his property that soured his temper. As long as I can remember anything—almost before I understood the meaning of the words—I heard of quarrels and bitterness at the great house.

The squire's lady was older than her husband, and very plain in person. I think she must have been slightly deformed, for she was always so closely wrapped up, that it was difficult to trace the outline of her figure. To the best of my belief, she never set her foot to the ground—at least, I never saw her walking. The carriage came round at a stated hour to a side-door of the old house, and her maids, it was said, lifted her into it. She never visited, or received company, and the state of her health was such that not a day passed without her seeing our village doctor. About once a week, a physician from London came down to her. Still, she grew neither better nor worse; and there were persons ill-natured enough to declare that her ailments were all fanciful. Every one was astonished when a report reached Fairholme from London, where the squire and his lady were spending the season, that she was expecting her confinement. It was true, nevertheless; and the family returned to the country earlier than usual that year, that she might be kept quiet. The heir, too, must be born at Fairholme. The place had descended from sire to son for centuries, and each succeeding landlord had first seen the light under that ancient roof. Bonfires were piled upon the hills when the time drew near. The church-bells were to be set ringing, and a feast was to be given in the park to all the tenantry, far and near.

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* More strictly, as the Olympic period commenced at the 1st of July, we must reckon sometimes from 776 B.C., sometimes from 777 B.C. A date falling in the first half of the year must be counted from the former, and one falling in the second half, from the latter epoch.

I was just eight years old then, and we lived in the farmhouse by the church, at the upper end of the village. My parents were plain, hard-working people, and it was through the squire's favour that they were enabled to rent the land they held. He had lowered the terms, because he had a liking for my father, who had worked as a labourer on the farm which he now occupied. My mother had been dairymaid at the Hall in the old master's lifetime, and had saved a little money; but still they were poor people, and squared accounts with difficulty at the year's end, after all their labour.

We were expecting to hear the bells ring, and to see the great piles of wood on the hill-tops lighted, when word came down from the great house that there were to be no rejoicings, no bell-ringing, nor, in short, any notice whatever to be taken of the birth of the squire's first child. For, after all, it was only a daughter!

I could not understand that this made much difference in the matter, and I longed to see the baby; but my mother cried when she heard the news, and said: 'Ah, poor lady, he will love her less than ever now!'

I do not know whether this was the case or not. There was not much time, it seemed, to decide it, for, an hour afterwards, the London physician's carriage rattled past—the second that had come through the village that day—and we heard that the baby's mother, our poor lady, was dying.

Ours was the nearest house, and perhaps for that reason we were always more interested than other folks in what was passing at the Hall. When the servants were at a loss for anything, they often applied to us rather than go further; and my mother always kept the best poultry, in case it should be wanted for the squire's table. Sometimes the mistress would fancy a loaf of our home-made bread, of my mother's baking, which was always sweet and good, better than the rolls and twists the housekeeper made to tempt her delicate, sickly appetite. It was not likely that my mother, who had a young family of her own, should not want to know how she was getting through her trial.

It was but a step to the great house, for the grove was just opposite our windows, and the servants had left the gate open in their hurry. In general, we never went through the plantation, but it was half a mile round by the road, and no one exactly knew that day what they were doing; so my mother caught me by the hand, and went across and under the deep shade of the evergreens, to know what was the matter.

I believe she was ashamed of her intrusion when, at a turn in the winding walk, we came suddenly upon the master. He was walking up and down with his brows knit together, and such an expression of disappointment in his face as I never saw dwelling on any human features before. My mother stood aside to let him pass, and courtesied deeply, holding me back from his path; but I question whether he ever noticed who it was, though he made a careless motion with his head. I can see him now, with the marks of sorrow and annoyance on his handsome haughty face, and his thoughts legibly printed on his furrowed brow. It was evident that he had set whatever hopes of happiness were left to him upon that cast, and he had lost his stake.

My mother did not venture to speak, even to apologise for intruding on his privacy; and as I have said, he was too much occupied with his own troubled thoughts to pay much attention to anything that passed before him. We only saw him for an instant; but when we reached the great house, the servants were setting out to look for him, and were glad to be told where he was. The poor babe was ill, and my lady's death was expected to take place every moment.

The little child was smaller than anything I could have imagined. It lay in the handsome cradle provided for the young heir of Fairholme like a waxen doll or a dead baby, so still that at first I fancied it was not alive. There was only one woman in the room; the rest were with their mistress. It was indeed not considered to be a matter of importance at that moment whether the poor little girl lived or died.

I thought differently, and so, I am sure, did my mother. She took the pretty little creature out of its cradle, and held it gently, in a kind, motherly way, in her arms. It seemed happy there, and gradually, as she warmed and caressed it, some faint colour stole into its face. Then she let me touch it, and I kissed my dear young lady for the first time. From that moment, I loved her.

The squire's wife did not die then, but she never was strong enough to leave her bed afterwards. My mother had been able, I heard, to think of some simple remedy which the doctors despised; but be that as it may, she derived more benefit from it than she had done from their prescriptions, and she never forgot the obligation. While it was being tried, my mother put the young baby into my arms, while the nurse was busy preparing its food. She knew that I might be trusted, for I had nursed both my little twin-brothers in turn when they were not older than this waxen darling. The child stopped the little feeble moan it had just begun to make, and, opening its blue eyes widely, looked up at me. Then the muscles of its tiny mouth, which had been drawn up fretfully, relaxed, and the infant smiled for the first time in its life in my face.

From that time, I went often to the great house. The child had taken a fancy to me, and was never quiet or happy except when it was in my arms. Its health was delicate, and my mother always said, that, in consequence of the great disappointment occasioned by its proving to be a girl, the servants followed the example of their master, and neglected it. I do not know whether this were the case, and whether, as she said, the child had had a fall, or whether it inherited its mother's infirmity of constitution, but it was a long, long time before it could use its limbs. I used to draw it about in the tiny carriage, in which it lay at full length. The child was so small that its weight made scarcely any difference.

After a time, the little lady was able to sit up, and play with the flowers gathered for her. There was nothing in the world I would not have done for her amusement. I am afraid I did not love my own sturdy little brothers half as well; but, then, they had a tender parent to care for them, and, before the time when my darling first learned to put her delicate feet to the ground, she was motherless.

Whatever might have been the case previously, after he lost his first wife, the squire's heart opened to his little daughter. He would come and sit for hours in the garden while we were at play, and help to draw her about when I was tired. The costliest toys were provided for her, and, certainly, there was no lack of care now taken in bringing her up; but she was never strong or like other girls of her age. The least change in the weather affected her; and when she was five years old, the physicians said that she would never bear to spend another winter in England.

It was a sore struggle with my mother on the morning when the squire stopped his horse at our gate to ask her to give up her little daughter to him. Though he was a man of few words, he had a way with him which few could gainsay. He would, he said, provide handsomely for me, and I should have the position in his house of an elder daughter. Times were hard enough for the farmers just then; but I am sure his liberal offers had a very small share in winning my mother over.

I do not know what kind of feeling it was that made me even then fancy that I could leave father and mother, and follow that dark, haughty, silent man, and his little sickly child, to the world's end. He scarcely ever spoke to me, but there was music in his few courteous words, and an imperious influence exercised by the mere turn of his head. I knew exactly what pleased him, and I taught Julia the secret of conciliating her fastidious parent, before I understood how I had learned it myself. Now, as I stood trembling beside my mother, the tears that sprang to my eyes were not from regret or timidity. The little girl at the great house seemed to belong to me; something like a mother's love filled my heart for the baby I had held in my arms so soon after its birth. I thought that she would die if I left her; and I believe that the squire, calmly as he proffered his petition, believed that his child's life depended upon its being granted.

My earnest wish carried the day, and I was allowed to accompany my darling. She was very ill at first; and if, in addition to sickness and debility, she had been obliged to contend with the deep feelings of regret which it would have cost her to part with her playmate, she would have broken down under the trial. My mother, in her own motherly way, had foreseen this. 'Poor little heart,' she said, 'she will never bear to part with Lucy. Let the children bide together.'

My father had taken a different view of the case, but it was one favourable to my wishes. Troubles were coming fast upon him, and he was glad to see my prospects so securely settled. It was a great surprise to him when the squire, after receiving his consent, graciously offered him the post of bailiff during his absence. It was a proof of confidence for which he was deeply grateful, and he felt that he owed it in a great measure to me. He was very sorry to part with his own girl, when the time of separation arrived; but it was too late to draw back; so, with many tears, I separated from my kind friends; and a few hours afterwards we were tossing on the waves of the Channel, sorry enough, now that the time was come, to leave the people and the place we loved behind us.

I am speaking for Julia and myself, as we lay crying in our cots. I do not think that her father cared much at that time for leaving England. His life had not been a happy one; and now, with his little daughter's fate in his charge, he seemed to be beginning the world anew. A sense of responsibility awoke within him. He watched the child narrowly. It was difficult for any one who attended upon her to serve her with sufficient assiduity, and he parted successively with all the attendants he had brought out with him. Before we had been a winter in Italy, our household was entirely remodelled. The *contadina*, with their bright locks and warm foreign manners, their caressing liquid accents and graceful gestures, pleased his artistic taste. He engaged two women fresh from their sunny homes in the bosom of the smiling hills around Albano to wait upon Julia, and the child caught up their beautiful language immediately.

Insensibly, our manners, perhaps our characters, changed. Living in that Italian clime, the eye fed upon sights of all that was loveliest in nature and art; our minds expanded rapidly, and very soon I felt that I could not have returned to the homely life I had quitted. No one knew who or what I was; and as we wandered from place to place, for Julia's health required constant change, I was taken sometimes for her elder sister, at others for her aunt, and on one occasion, as time went on, for her mother.

I shall not easily forget that day. We were sitting on the terrace in front of the villa in which we were residing for a time near Turin, when some insect crept out of the vine-leaves in the basket of fruit Julia was carrying, and stung her hand. I was frightened, and flew to her, for she was still a perfect child, and cried bitterly. An artist, who was sketching the view of the Alps from our garden, made a picture of us, while the child lay crying in my arms, as mother and daughter. When the sketch was finished, he handed it to Julia's father, entreating his acceptance of the portraits of his wife and daughter, as a return for his kind hospitality.

Julia laughed when she perceived his mistake; but her father made no effort to explain matters. He took the drawing, thanked the artist, saying that the likenesses were extremely good, and he should value it excessively. The next time I went into his room with Julia, I saw it hanging on the wall, opposite to his accustomed seat, mounted in a costly frame with a wide margin. Underneath the sketch was written, in his own hand, 'Madre e Figliuola.'

In spite of our unremitting care, Julia, as she grew up, did not become stronger. Her fair complexion was so exquisitely flushed with the rosy hue of health, as we persisted in calling it, that we disguised to ourselves the fact that those pearly tints and warm, fitful blushes were the harbingers of deadly disease. I scarcely recollect what position I held in the establishment during our long attendance upon her; I only know that it was one of great responsibility, and that when it ended—when, after wandering from land to land, we laid her at last to rest under the myrtle and orange-groves of Seville—it seemed to me that I was indeed, by the sacred chain of suffering, her mother!

My deep childish respect for her father still abided with me, but a tenderer feeling mingled with it as we sorrowed over her grave together. It was on my arm that he, the strong, haughty, powerful man leaned when we visited the spot, and saw the moonlight gleaming on the marble slab which contained the record of her short life and of our never-ending sorrow. I felt that his form trembled—the words he tried to speak died upon his lips unuttered; perhaps, if he had spoken in that softened hour, the colour of our destiny might have been altogether different.

Very little communication had passed between me and my parents during these years of foreign travel. Now that my task was ended, I began to contemplate my return to them. Must I confess that the idea filled me with unmitigated dread.

I put aside the thought, and tried to regard my graver companion as a parent, but it was less easy to do so than formerly. As his deep grief wore slowly away, that proud, haughty nature unbent, and we became for the first time friends. I had no other companion now, and we read together books of Italian poetry, the language of which was more familiar to me than my native tongue. Our servants regarded us as near relatives. No curiosity was excited, as would have been the case in England, by our residing under the same roof. For some time, all went on smoothly.

One morning, when I was drawing in the shady court or garden at the back of the house, into which the apartments opened which had been appropriated to Julia and myself, her father suddenly stood beside me. It was very seldom that he broke in upon my solitude—for we met usually with some ceremony. I did not understand the meaning of his disturbed glances, but something in his manner struck me as peculiar, and I began to put away my pencils and brushes. He was so much agitated that I thought he might wish to be left alone with the memory of his daughter.

'Stay, Lucy,' he said, when he saw that I was about to leave him—'Lucia,' he added, smiling. 'How much better I like the Italian pronunciation of our cold English words and names. Do you not think that you might almost pass for a native of the sunny peninsula, after all the years you spent there?'

'Possibly,' I answered with some surprise; 'Italy seems more like a home to me than England. But I suppose,' I said, hesitating, unwilling to lose the opportunity he had afforded—'that I ought—that I must think of returning to my parents.'

His dark eyes flashed fire. 'That was not my meaning, Lucia. When we left home, your father and mother gave you to me. Your own wishes ratified the bond. Have I ever given you cause to wish it cancelled?'

'No,' I said trembling, almost weeping. 'I have been only too happy. I am afraid I am very unfit to live at home. But I must try to accustom myself to the position of an English farmer's daughter.'

'That is absolutely and entirely out of the question,' he said; 'besides, I cannot part with you. Have you forgotten that angel's last words?'

I was dreadfully agitated. Julia with her dying breath had conjured me never to leave her father. I scarcely remembered what I had said. I did not know that he had heard what passed between us. I could not answer him.

'Lucia,' he said, coming nearer to me, 'you promised my dying child that you would never forsake me. At that moment, I scarcely thought what it was you were saying. I ought to have prevented your making a vow which circumstances have rendered so solemn; but I candidly confess that all my thoughts were wrapped up in my darling. It is different with me now. I do not love her less—neither of us can do that—but I love you more than all the world beside. Do you really wish to leave me?'

Closer and closer he drew me towards him as he spoke. I laid my head on his shoulder, and wept as if my heart would break.

It was the first caress he had given me. Even as a child, his manner to me had been always kind, but cold; and as a woman, he had always treated me with marked respect. Now I felt the wild throb of his heart beating against my own, the trembling of the hands that yet held me so firmly.

At last he released me. 'Listen to me, Lucia,' he said; 'I have a plan to propose. You are too old to live with me as you have hitherto done like a daughter; but we cannot part—you know what my position was in England. Some years hence, I may return to that country, but not at present. Our travels are not ended. I mean to take you to see everything that is most remarkable in climes yet nearer to the sun than this romantic land. India, Persia, the isles of the Pacific, where the coral and madrepore glow under the waters like the flowers of earth—you shall see them all; but you must first become my wife.'

He paused. I knew not what to answer. 'I am not worthy,' I said at last, as my old habits of respect and deference came back. 'You have forgotten the difference there is between us in station.'

'No,' he said; 'I remember it well. You must give up all for me, Lucia—father, mother, and all associates of your former life. You must relinquish the whole world for me. Can you do this?'

The half-smile with which he spoke reassured me. He went on speaking rapidly.

'Circumstances have occurred which suggested to me the plan I propose. There has been a mistake. Your name has been inserted in the public papers as the companion of my daughter not only in life, but in the grave. Your parents believe you to have perished. Their grief has no doubt been deep, but they have other children—time has alleviated their sorrow. I, Lucia, have no one but you.'

He put into my hand a short letter from my uncle, a person entirely a stranger to me, inquiring into the circumstances of my supposed death, which was reported to have taken place at Seville, the result of a fever which had been raging there virulently. The writing was that of an entirely illiterate commonplace person, and the expression of feeling was trivial, and by no means calculated to impress me as, no doubt, the merest sentence in the handwriting of one of my own parents would have done. I gave it back in silence.

'You see they have already reconciled themselves to their loss. For me, it would be a life-long sorrow. Lucia, you must not leave me. If we ever return to England, no one will know you. Should we ever revisit Fairholme, my foreign wife would never be recognised as the little uneducated country-girl I took away with me. You cannot be again what you were then. Let the past be obliterated for ever.'

I cannot recall the arguments by which he won me over to his wishes. After all, his task was not so difficult as might be supposed, for I was in the habit of obeying him implicitly, and I had no friends to consult. It would have been impossible for me to remain with him longer except as his wife; and when he bent his whole soul to the effort of winning my affections, I could not oppose that irresistible will.

I daresay there were rejoicings in the place where I was born when the news arrived that the squire had married again; but no one dreamed that the old couple living at the Home Farm had any connection with his newly chosen bride. No congratulations met us, no crowd waited at the door of the foreign chapel, into which we walked almost alone. Nevertheless, my husband's second marriage was a happy one.

I had not much time given me for reflection. Those who sojourn as we did, year after year in foreign lands, changing their abode whenever its novelties are exhausted, have not the same associations to revive old feelings and reawaken conscience as the dwellers in English homes, where church-bells and village sights and sounds, repeated day by day and week after week, ring in our ears and pass before our eyes.

The cataracts and temples of the Nile, as we dreamily floated on its current, or stemmed the rapids, the gorgeous sunsets, the golden moonlights of the tropics, the tread of the camel, the languid motion of the palanquin, the caves of Ellora, the shifting sands of the desert—were familiar objects to me in the swiftly passing years, crowded with incident and adventure, during which we travelled together over Egypt, and Syria, and finally rested from our wanderings among English people, hearing our own language with delight, in the Indian cities of palaces.

I do not think that I felt any misgivings respecting the step I had taken during several happy years after our marriage—not, indeed, until I began to perceive in my husband a yearning desire to return to England. Our children were suffering from the Indian climate. We must send or take our little boy and his sister to England. When I saw which way the inclination which had so long guided my own pointed, I did not interpose any obstacle to the fulfilment of my husband's wishes; but now that I was a mother, I began to tremble lest my own misconduct in deceiving and forsaking my parents should be visited upon me through my children.

I scarcely realised what the return to my birthplace would cost me until, after more than twenty years of absence, I saw the oaks of Fairholme crowning the hill down which lay the road to the old Hall. The western heavens were flushed with crimson, and the reflection of the sunset glowed on the long range of upper windows. Two of these belonged to the room which had been Julia's nursery. I almost fancied that I saw her little childish face at the window looking out for me, as she had done a hundred times when I was on my way from the farm to the great house to play with her.

My hand was firmly clasped in my husband's. There was no one with us in the carriage. Our two children were with their ayahs in the old-fashioned family coach which had been sent to meet us at the town near our home. Our arrival had been only announced that morning; nevertheless, the whole village was astir to receive us. My husband returned the cordial welcoming of his humble neighbours with courtesy. His manners were certainly much softened. As for me, I shrank back, ashamed of being seen; unconvinced, as the old home-feelings rushed, for the first time for many years, upon me, how impossible it was that even my own parents should recognise me.

The climax of my suffering came when the carriage swept round the corner, and the last house in the long straggling village, the thatched roof and casement windows, the little garden, gay with summer flowers, with the path to the door through its centre, lay before me. I scarcely breathed till I had passed it; but my parents were old now. No one came out from that house to gaze at us.

The foreign lady, as my own people called me, was forgiven for not returning their greetings. When we stopped at our own door, and I forgot myself for a moment in my anxiety about the children's arrival, raising my veil for the first time that afternoon to look out for them, a loud hurrah rent the air. My husband drew my arm within his own, and stood calmly and collectedly on the steps under the portico, thanking the tenantry for their kind reception, and inviting them to regale themselves in the park, where tables were ordered to be laid out immediately. We heard them shouting, and drinking our healths and that of the children, after we had gone indoors, and while the nurses were preparing to lay my tired little ones in the beds where Julia and I had often slept side by side, when any fancy of hers, or inclement weather, detained me at the great house.

I could not close my eyes when I lay down that night. A thousand times I wished myself a child again, sleeping within the little chintz-patterned bed-curtains at the farm. How I longed to run up the hill, and throw my arms round my mother's neck, and to hear the homely jests, which sometimes used to make me angry when my father spoke, after the soft language of the inmates of the Hall! Ah, I would have given the world to climb upon his knee, and hear him call me his own dear little Lucy, and bid me not to be set up with the presents and compliments which I was but too fond of boasting about when I returned from the Hall.

I saw my parents for the first time in church. Their pew was not far from us. The silver-haired yeoman stood aside to let me pass. I bent my head reverentially. How little did he think that he had made way for his own daughter! I remembered the corner where I used to sit in their large square seat, the pattern of diamonds on the carpet that I used to count, my mother's black silk dress—it could not be the same, but the make was scarcely altered. She had not used spectacles formerly; but how my eyes grew dim as I watched her wiping my father's glasses and her own, and finding the places in the large old Bible and Prayer-book, which had been laid on the high desk, formed by the top of the pew, Sunday after Sunday, for more years than I could remember.

The magnitude of the fault I had committed came vividly before me as I looked at that dear old couple. My husband watched me anxiously. I do not know what were his feelings, but I believe them to have been that, if it were to be done again, he would not have brought his wife to Fairholme.

Though none of the domestics who had gone abroad with their master returned with us to England, very little change had taken place in the establishment maintained at home, beyond the inevitable alteration produced by our long absence. Time had laid a gentle hand on the still comely housekeeper. She seemed to me so like the image which I had retained of her in my mind ever since she used to feed Julia and me with sweet-cakes in her pleasant room, that I trembled lest she should recognise me; but in the pale, slender woman of three-and-thirty, with a skin darkened by the hot sunshine of warmer skies than hung over the Fairholme oaks, there was little to remind her of the rosy, fair-haired English child who had been her young mistress's playfellow.

My silence was construed into ignorance of my native language. I had unconsciously, during our long residence abroad, acquired a foreign idiom; and the intelligence that their new lady was an Italian, had been carefully instilled into the minds of all.

My evident emotion had gained for me their favour. The few words I uttered hesitatingly, could scarcely be otherwise than gracious, when among those present there was not one who had not, on many occasions, shewn me kindness. There was Hillary, the old gardener, who used to let me steal his flowers, and would load me with fruit to set out our desserts: there was Prior, the coachman; how often he had carried me in, in wet weather, through the mud to spend the afternoon with Julia in the long gallery where we played battledoor and shuttlecock, when, in the short, cold winter days, she was not permitted to leave the house.

Our children did not gain strength as rapidly as we expected. As for me, I never left the house, except to walk in the flower-garden at the back, where, in former days, I used to draw Julia up and down in the little carriage. The smoke rising from the chimneys of the farm on the hill seemed a constant reproach to me, but I dared not disobey my husband. I was more cut off from my parents now than I had felt when the sea first flowed between us.

The master was just the same as ever, the villagers said. If there was any change in his appearance, it was for the better. He certainly looked happier than formerly, when we first came home, but gradually his cheerfulness forsook him. Our boy, the darling of our vain hearts, inherited Julia's delicacy of constitution. Day after day, we saw him wasting away before our eyes. Even my anxiety to ask forgiveness of my parents was forgotten. Night after night, hour by hour, I watched over him, but his days were numbered. When the spring-flowers came out, in the season when the sun shone warmly, and the winds were cutting, we lost him. Then my little fairy girl began to fade away. She pined after her brother, wanting me to fetch him back to play with her. I believe that my anxiety about her kept me from feeling my first great loss as I should have done. I seemed to lose my boy over again, when, in the summer heat, she was laid low. There is nothing but the grave under the yew-trees in Fairholme churchyard left to me of my two eldest darlings—my little dark-haired Indian children.

We went away again for more than two years, travelling over different parts of England. When I returned to Fairholme, I was expecting soon to become once more a mother. How well I remembered the silencing of the church-bells, the disappointment of the villagers when Julia was born. Was the same scene to be acted over again? Was it fated that there should be no heir to Fairholme?

I felt in my heart that I deserved no better fortune as I lay back in the carriage faint and desponding; I could not even return the fond pressure of my husband's hand when the Fairholme oaks came once again in sight.

'Send for her,' I said faintly. 'I will not betray your secret; but let me have my own mother to tend me in my trial-hour. I am so changed, she will never recognise me.'

My husband did not oppose my wishes; and, a week afterwards, I was in my chamber at the hall, conscious of nothing but that my own parent was watching over me. She remembered that the squire's first wife had praised her skill as a tender of the sick, and imagined this to be the cause of the urgent request that she would come to the foreign lady. When my babe was born, my mother's arms received the young heir of Fairholme. This time, the church-bells rang their merriest peal, and, as I lay in my bed, I could see the red glow of the bonfires on the hill-top, under the broad canopy of the Fairholme oaks, and against the gray evening sky.

When my husband looked down fondly upon me, when I raised the coverlet from the brow of his little son, I do not think there was anything in the world he would have refused me.

As he stooped to kiss me, I drew his haughty head down, near, and yet nearer to me.

'Shall we risk losing him too, Augustus? Must pride always come between us and our darlings and Heaven's favour? Am I not your wife? What matters it how lowly I was born? You have raised me to your own station. Let my own mother's blessing and forgiveness hallow the birthday of our son. We shall never keep him with us if we do not humble ourselves before God.'

A passionate flush did cross my husband's brow; but it soon passed away. I have never seen a shadow of anger on it since; and our boy is a noble little fellow, full of health and strength, the very pride and joy of our hearts. Is it because when we thanked our Maker for giving him to us, we acknowledged our errors, and craved forgiveness, making such restitution as lay in our power for the sorrow our deception had caused in those honest hearts?

I am not ashamed to face the light of day now. I no longer seek to conceal my features, and feel my voice shake if I trust myself to speak within sight and hearing of my kindred. My family have never presumed on the discovery that their long-lost darling is the lady of the manor; nor has my husband ever had reason to regret that he yielded to my wish, and himself placed our baby in my own mother's arms, entreating her to ease my heart by her blessing and forgiveness.

We have several children now, and the Hall is very far from heirless. Their glad voices sound under the ancient oaks on the braes and in the hollows, and wake the echoes in the old garden at the farm where I used to play in my childhood. There is a glad light in my mother's eyes, which I missed when I first came back from my wanderings. My father's step is firmer; and though they visit us less often than we could wish, there is always a place and a welcome for my parents at the old Hall of Fairholme, where their descendants are growing to more vigorous manhood, perhaps from the infusion into their somewhat sluggish veins, of the stalwart strength and sturdy honesty of the British yeoman.

THE PORT OF THE WORLD.

As the biography of a 'Hero,' a Type of his Class, is above all others interesting and significant, so a full account of the most flourishing Port of England, as a Representative City, an illustration of the magnitude of our Commerce, cannot but have its value too. The town of Liverpool has been lately fixed upon by a writer of this kind of biography,[*] and he could hardly have made a better choice. In 1857, very nearly one half of the whole products of British industry exported to foreign countries and the colonies were shipped at Liverpool—that is to say, out of 122 millions, articles to the value of 55 millions were exported from that place; about half that amount from London; about 16 millions from Hull; about 5 millions from Glasgow; and about 2 millions from Southampton. The aggregate value of the imports and exports of Liverpool is upwards of 100 millions *per annum*. The imports principally consist—although of course there is a long list of miscellaneous articles—of the raw materials of the chief manufactures carried on in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Yorkshire; of grain, flour, and provisions; and of timber for the construction of warehouses and ships. The exports are chiefly manufactured goods. The population within four miles of the Liverpool Exchange at the present time, is about 600,000 souls, and the rate of annual increase about 10,000. The amount of property and income-tax paid by them yearly is greater than that by any other city in the United Kingdom, except the metropolis, and amounted, in 1857, to upwards of 7 millions. The amount of ship-tonnage registered at, and belonging to this port, was, in the same year, 936,022, being greater by 76,882 tons than that of London itself.

The number of vessels engaged in the foreign and colonial trade which entered the port during the same period was 4528, and the number which cleared out was 5003; of vessels in the coasting trade, 9677 entered, and 10,509 cleared out; while the total amount of tonnage, in and out, was upwards of Nine Million tons!

Of the vessels which arrived in Liverpool from abroad in 1857—which is the last year for which we have an official return—the United States sent by far the largest and the most numerous; namely, 934 ships, of an average burden of more than 1000 tons.[†] The trade which seems to be of the smallest value is that with Tunis and the Burman empire, which sent only one ship each. Of those countries which the present war is likely to seriously affect, 174 came from the Italian states; 71 from the northern, and 31 from the southern ports of Russia; and 317 from France. Of the vessels which cleared out from Liverpool, 842 went to the United States; 3 to Tunis, and again 1 only to Burmah, which we will hope was not the same going back again; to the Italian states, 250; to Russia, 289;

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[*] *Liverpool in 1859.* By Thomas Baines. London: Longman.

[†] It is on board these American ships that the infamous brutalities occur which we so frequently read of in the reports from the Liverpool police-offices. In an able pamphlet lately addressed to Mr Whitbread, M. P., upon this subject, *By a Liverpool Merchant*, the causes of the want of redress which the unhappy victims almost always experience, are clearly explained, and the revision of our international laws with the United States insisted upon. The way in which the sailors are kidnapped at New York, or New Orleans, is remarkably simple: 'Induced to cross the river in a small boat, and thus brought on board by force,' is quite a common statement of the patients in hospital; or, sometimes, 'sent on board on business, and detained there.' From June 1857 to June 1858, there were no less than one hundred and thirty-five cases of men injured in American ships on the high seas in the Liverpool hospitals.

and to France, 241. These figures, which rather weary and perplex the uncommercial reader, are the very Poetry of Liverpool; the sort of numbers in which that city has lisped from her earliest years. We can easily imagine a sort of Epic feeling coming over her as she peruses her Dock returns, and finds herself stretching out her hand to make commercial amity with some new country yearly. Even we ourselves—the writer of this paper—who are by no means merchant-princes, experience a certain satisfaction in filling our mouths with these millions and millions, although, unfortunately, they do not belong to us. We should like to possess one of those half-dozen vessels bound for the Sandwich Islands, the inhabitants of which are fast losing their taste for Liverpool sailor *au naturel;* or one of those two that are off to the Cape de Verdes, whose name arouses within us a tender feeling born of the geographical associations of our childhood; and we are truly astonished and grieved to see that there is no craft destined for Juan Fernandez with arms, and provisions, and carpenters' tools, sent by Mr R. Crusoe, merchant, for the benefit of his Spaniards in that island, and consigned to the care of Messrs Bright, Gibbs, and Company, in the usual way.

Another great branch of the shipping business of Liverpool, and one certainly not inferior in importance even to its Trade, is the conveyance of emigrants to foreign and colonial countries. The tide of even German emigration now flows through England, and escapes through Liverpool in preference to Hamburg and Bremen. Of the 212,875 British emigrants in 1857, nearly 156,000 sailed from this port. As an illustration of the degree of popularity enjoyed by each country in the eyes of those who are looking for a new home, the United States attracted 126,905 of the above number; British America, 21,001; and Australia, 61,248; while all other places together—of which South Africa had far the greatest proportion—could only boast of 3721. At the meeting of the Social Science Association in Liverpool, it was stated that the total number of emigrants who had left the shores of Great Britain from 1815 to 1857 amounted to upwards of four millions and a half. It surely, therefore, becomes of enormous consequence that we should conciliate by all means such a mighty nation as this, and that, at least, the last recollections of Old England should be made pleasant and grateful to them by the paternal care of its government with respect to their safe and healthy transit. There are no less than three lines of steam-ships from Liverpool to North America; and as there has been much dispute about the comparative length of the eastern and western passages across the Atlantic, by paddle and screw, it may be interesting to know the facts. During 1858, there were made 281 North Atlantic voyages by mail and passenger steamers. The average length of the eastern passages, from New York to Liverpool, was, by Cunard's line, 10 days 20 hours; by Collins', 11 days 4 hours; and by Liverpool screws, 13 days 3 hours. The average of their western passages, from Liverpool to New York, was, by Cunard's line, 12 days 13 hours; by Collins', 14 days 16 hours; and by Liverpool screws, 13 days 21 hours. Upwards of 50,000 persons were carried across the North Atlantic during this period, and paid L.800,000 passage-money; and although nearly 1 per cent. of these lost their lives, it was by reason of a very exceptional misfortune, the burning of the *Austria* (Hamburg steamer). In safety, as well as in speed, the Liverpool steam-craft have no superiors. The passenger-traffic to Australia and New Zealand is mostly carried on by clipper sailing-vessels.

The great feather in the cap of Liverpool, the enormous plume of feathers, rather, of which she is wont with reason to boast, is of course her Docks. When the Egerton Dock, and a portion of the Great Float, which are now in course of reconstruction, are completed, there will be no less than Four Hundred Acres of water-space within the docks of the Mersey. They run from north to south a distance of five miles on the Liverpool side of the river, and from east to west a distance of two miles on the Birkenhead side. A dock of four acres, large enough to receive 100 small vessels, and yielding a revenue of only six hundred a year, was the germ from which this unrivalled undertaking has sprung. The revenue of the Wellington alone, by no means the largest of the present docks, and containing but 7 acres 4120 square yards, amounted in 1858 to nearly L.18,000! The sea-wall along the Liverpool side of the Mersey, by which the shipping in the long line of docks is preserved from wind and storm, is one of the greatest works of any age. 'It was necessary that this wall should be long enough to protect the whole line of docks; that the foundations should be sunk to such a depth as to resist the undermining influence of the stream; that it should be strong enough to resist the violence of the greatest storms; and that it should be sufficiently lofty to beat off the highest waves: and all these objects have been attained. The present length of this sea-wall is 9700 yards, or upwards of five miles; its average thickness is 11 feet; its average height from the foundations is 40 feet. The older part of the sea-wall is formed of red sandstone, but the modern is faced on the upper part with Scottish granite. The mortar is formed from the lime of the Halkin Mountain, in North Wales.

'In erecting the sea-wall in front of the Liverpool Docks, great difficulties had to be overcome in obtaining a solid foundation. The foundation in front of the Prince's Dock, in the narrowest part of the river, and that in which the currents are strongest, had to be laid on great balks of timber, sunk to a depth which could be reached only twice in the year, and then only for a few days, namely, at the vernal and the autumnal equinoxes, when the tides ebb to the lowest point of the whole year. At one of those periods, in the month of March 1817, the low-water workings were entirely prevented by the tempestuousness of the weather, and nothing could be done, at that part of the foundation, until the end of September and the beginning of October. Fortunately, the weather was favourable at that time, and six courses of balks were laid, extending 105 yards in length. It was thus that a foundation was slowly gained, which has since defied the violence of storms, and the constant action of the most rapid currents. Similar difficulties were met with in obtaining a solid foundation at other points. At the river-entrance of the George's Basin it was necessary to form a foundation by driving piles, to a great depth, through a quicksand. The whole of the river-wall in front of the Albert Dock, and the piers of the double entrance from the river into the half-tide basin, are on a quicksand, and rest on 13,792 piles of beech-wood timber. The entrances to the Wellington Half-tide Dock are also built on long piles of beech-timber, driven down into a very deep peat-moss, in which the branches of trees, and the horns of the deer and the buffalo, have been found, far below the present line of low-water.'

Upwards of eighty pair of gigantic gates have been put up in the Liverpool Docks during the last thirty years, and some of these reach to the enormous and unparalleled width of 100 feet! This is more than double their original width; the necessity for the increase having of course arisen in the huge character of the present shipping; sailing-vessels of 1500, and steamers of upwards of 3000 tons requiring to be accommodated regularly in the Mersey basins. We cannot better close this brief account of the wonders of this Port of the World, than by the words of

Montalembert: 'Everywhere else, all the power and wealth of autocracy must avow themselves vanquished and eclipsed by that incomparable fecundity of private industry, which, in our time, without having been either incited or aided by the state, has hollowed out, in the port of Liverpool, floating docks six times as vast as those of Cherbourg.' The Frenchman suffered, as we know, for this admission, but he spoke the truth.

ADAM DE CRAPONNE.

Of all the fair valleys of Provence, the valley of the Durance is the fairest; its thriving plantations of olives, its fields glowing with ripening harvests, its vineyards loaded with magnificent grapes, all arrest the admiration of the traveller, and cause him to exclaim at every step, 'Happy are the people born in such a land!' And yet, scarcely four centuries ago, this fair landscape was shrouded in the desolation of barrenness; a scorched and arid soil scarcely sufficed to supply the scanty food of a diminished and sickly population; while frequent inundations, first sweeping away the hard-won harvest of the labourer, and then settling down into pestilential marshes, produced an annual contagion that decimated the miserable inhabitants of this unhappy province.

It was thus, amidst scenes of poverty and disease, that Adam de Craponne passed his early years. He was born in the year 1521, at the village of Salon in Lower Provence, the descendant of a family formerly distinguished by brave and illustrious men, and still holding a respectable position amongst the provincial noblesse. The times had already passed away when a nobleman would have blushed to acknowledge any intimacy with the *clerkly* pursuits of reading or writing; public acts were no longer terminated by the invariable formula, 'et ledit seigneur a déclaré ne savoir signer, attendu sa qualité de gentilhomme;' still a remnant of this long-existing prejudice interdicted to the French nobility any proficiency in the arts and sciences, and Adam de Craponne shewed a spirit in advance of his time, when, even in childhood, he devoted himself with serious attention to the lessons of his masters. As his intellect developed, he felt it completely impossible to submit to this absurd law of opinion; having been born with a genius for mathematics, he had learned, before the age of fifteen, all that his provincial masters could teach him; and from that time pursued his problems unassisted, giving them a practical tendency by applying his acquirements to the science of hydraulic architecture, and soon gaining the reputation of being the best engineer of his day.

It was not without a motive that he had devoted himself to this pursuit. From earliest childhood, he had manifested the deepest tenderness of heart and sympathy with the sufferers around him; his childish dainties were always shared with his favoured children, and his mother could give him no greater reward than the power of relieving some object of distress encountered in his walks. Often she had been obliged to say: 'My child, we cannot relieve them all!' The words sank deep into his heart; they gave a direction to his studies, and laid the foundation of a project which became the day-dream of his life.

The most pressing evil in this dreary locality was the fever which annually wasted away the strength of the inhabitants, and desolated their homes. There were no sanitary commissions in those days to enlarge on the advantages of drainage; but it was obvious to the most uninstructed that, so long as the marsh of Frejus and its minor depositories sent forth their pestilential emanations to meet the summer sun, that season must remain for them a sorrow instead of a joy. The evil and its cause were thus generally recognised, but it devolved on our young philanthropist to devise the remedy. He devoted a considerable time to the different bearings of the case, took his levels with exactness, and counted the cost; then submitting his plan and his estimate to the leading engineers of the day, he was not only gratified by their cordial approbation of his talent, but also appreciating his generous motive, they transmitted the documents to Henry II., then reigning monarch of France; who, equally struck with the talents and the zeal of the young engineer, immediately authorised this important work, and confided the conduct of it to its warm-hearted originator.

We may well believe his heart was more touched with the good he had in view, than by any personal distinction. His name was on every lip; he was invited to court, and received with flattering notice: at a time when royal favour was all in all, he might easily have made his fortune; but he valued courtly smiles only as stepping-stones to further usefulness, and withdrew from them as much as possible, to devote his time to the studies necessary for maturing his plans. How easily in the present day an act of parliament would have authorised his undertaking, and a joint-stock company contributed the funds; but in those different times all depended on individual exertion and individual favour. The path to the noblest ends was a tortuous, and often a polluted one; the best and purest had to stoop to propitiate the vile; and six years of courtly life Adam had to endure in Paris, though he devoted every spare moment to his favourite pursuit.

When he returned to his early home, it was at the commencement of the hot season; and although the marsh no longer sent forth its fetid exhalations, still the picture of scanty crops, of poverty and discontent, to which he had been early accustomed, and had never forgotten during his long absence, seemed now heightened into tenfold wretchedness to his unaccustomed sight. He had been long entitled throughout the entire province 'the poor man's friend,' and soon found that this was not a mere honorary appellation. Each day some ruined householder would seek for aid at his door—either the heat had withered up their olives, or the expected harvest had perished, or the *mistral* had scattered the almond blossoms, and the untimely fruit lay on the ground. Again and again his mother's words would recur to his memory: 'How can I relieve them all;' and again, while his purse was never closed, and his sympathy ever ready to encourage the desponding, his own heart was kept from sinking by the remembrance of his early day-dream, and by the consciousness that he had yet the power to realise it.

We may image him, at the close of one of those long weary summer-days, worn out and dispirited by his fruitless labours of love. He sits beside his open casement; the hot night-air brings no refreshment to his brow; he leans his head upon his hand, sadly thinking of all the scenes he has witnessed throughout the day; his musings become more rapt; they take a different turn; he raises his head, with a smile, his eye brightens, he starts to his feet—what music is in his ear? it is 'as the sound of many waters;' he calls for his lamp, seizes his pen, and, convinced that the right hour is come, with the fervid eloquence of a heart profoundly touched, he details the miseries of the district to his king, dwells upon their baneful influence on the moral as well as physical wellbeing of the people, relates how the hardy labourer has become a dangerous and reckless robber; and again submitting his plan, supplicates for the means to snatch his fellow-countrymen from ruin. According to the fashion of the time, he made assurance doubly sure by also addressing himself to Ambrose Paré, the king's physician, and to Diana of

Poitiers, to whom he had rendered some personal service while at court.

But courtiers are faithless to a proverb, and neither sovereign nor subordinates justified the confidence Craponne had placed in them. After weeks of unaccountable delay, instead of the assistance on which he had so confidently reckoned, he received from Henry II. a grant, in form of fief 'to Adam de Craponne, gentleman of the town of Salon-en-Cran, of all rights and duties of octroi on the waters of the Durance, which should henceforth flow through his canal!'

Notwithstanding the bitterness of this disappointment, Adam would not now allow himself to be discouraged, and no longer hoping for royal aid to forward his great design, he resolved to take it on himself, and to devote his entire time and fortune to its accomplishment.

Adam de Craponne was so generally beloved that this enterprise, visionary as it may have seemed, became possible for him. He assembled the heads of families whom he had so often succoured, imparted to them his cherished project, and claimed their assistance. They listened with profound respect and gratitude; hardly had he concluded, when hundreds of voices were raised in acclamation and thankful acceptance of his offers; hundreds of stout arms were proffered for his service; and encouraging his army of labourers by his immediate example, he forthwith seized a spade, and turning the first sod, entered on the realisation of his life-long dream.

Everywhere willing hands were at his disposal; even a band of robbers who had for some time ravaged the country, driven to crime through destitution rather than deliberate choice, being offered a fair recompense for their labour, gladly exchanged the poniard and musket for the shovel and spade, thus becoming useful members of the community; and so the work went on. But Craponne had now to encounter a different class of individuals. He had been in treaty with the neighbouring communes and proprietors for the ground necessary for the canal; many, emulating his disinterestedness, had placed at his disposal the corner of a field or vineyard, an olive plantation, or an almond grove, through which the cutting should pass; but a far more numerous proprietary viewed the undertaking as an opportunity of gaining ready money, and Adam, determined in the first instance to liquidate the hire of his workmen, found himself called on to pay beforehand for the ground on which they were to work. He contemplated with terror the rapid diminution of his resources, but there was now no drawing back. To renounce his undertaking or to leave it unfinished would entail the loss of all he had expended, and in addition to his original motives, his honour was now involved in his success. Confident in his talents, and relying on his integrity, several farmers in the neighbourhood had advanced small loans towards the work, and Adam knew that he could now only fulfil his engagements to them by completing the work, and thus rendering the government grant of its profits available.

In this extremity, he again had recourse to Henry, and to the parliament; but from both those powers he received good wishes and congratulations, and nothing more. The nobility of the province shewed no greater generosity; each individual lauded his disinterestedness to the skies, his goodness, his genius, but not one contributed the smallest offering to his undertaking. Nothing daunted, Adam passed on to the *bourgeoisie*, and having vainly endeavoured to enlist their feelings of honour and humanity in favour of his work, he tried them on the score of interest, promising to recompense a hundredfold whoever furnished him with the means of completing it; but a smile and a shrug was all 'the generous enthusiast' could obtain.

There still remained a château and small demesne, descended from his ancestors, and his last and most cherished possession. It was sold; and by this sacrifice, after five years of losses, privations, and discouragement, still never faltering, never relinquishing hope, he reached the goal—the canal was completed at length. What, then, were all his past troubles? They only served to enhance the rapture of that crowning day when the sparkling waters of the Durance, precipitating themselves into their new bed, flowed along through the sterile wastes they were so soon to transform into a blooming garden, waving with golden corn, glowing with sunny fruits.

The entire population from Cadenet to Berre, a distance of thirty leagues, pressed along the banks of the canal, each individual anticipating the arrival of the waters with joyous acclamations. At Salon, all the clergy, the chapter of St Laurent, and the brotherhood of penitents, formed a procession to the bounds of the territory to bless this source of abundance, opened up by the Salonais engineer. Following the different religious orders came the municipal corps, the sturdy labourers, the pale tradesmen, and then a crowd of women, children, and old men, all filled with wondering expectation, all resounding the praises of Adam de Craponne, as they mingled his name with the psalms they chanted in honour of God.

But they sought him in vain. As modest as he was gifted, the originator of all this happiness had stolen away from the triumph prepared for him. Concealed in the house of a relation, he beheld—himself unseen—the crowd pass by; and as each joyous burst of acclamation reached him, as he contemplated their enthusiastic gestures, he, who till then had known neither doubt nor fear, whom no obstacles could discourage, no disappointment unnerve—now, even amidst his well-founded confidence in his success, he felt a sudden thrill as he asked himself, could there be any failure after all? He knelt in fervent prayer, and with difficulty succeeded in surmounting his agitation. Just then, a shout rending the air proclaimed the arrival of the waters on the territory of Salon; borne with it on the breeze seemed to come the rushing sound of his former night-watch, now no fanciful illusion. Again he cast himself on his knees, rendering thanks to God as he exclaimed: 'From henceforth, no willing labourer shall want for bread.'

His prophecy was speedily realised. Hardly was the canal completed, when rippling streams on every side irrigated the valley of La Cran, covering its barren soil with the richest verdure, and bringing life and fruitfulness to its trees. Thirty thousand four hundred and forty-nine hectares of unproductive soil, the property of eighteen communes, were soon transformed into a smiling landscape, and peopled with a robust and joyous peasantry, such as form its inhabitants at the present day.

Would that we could thus take our leave of Adam de Craponne; with the great wish of his heart fulfilled, enjoying the respect and gratitude he had so nobly won, and living on to an honoured old age, his days gliding peacefully along like the waters he had won from their troubled bed, amidst scenes of beauty and abundance; but this is not the world's way: its greatest benefactors have been fain to feel that here is not their rest, and that their happiness springs more from within than without. We have spoken of Adam's modest home at Salon: this house, his last remaining possession, bears a different aspect now. One by one, each heir-loom, each cherished memorial, each article of value, had been removed and sold, to meet some pressing exigency in his work. At last, the house itself was mortgaged for half its value, and now even a shelter within its walls is dependent on his ability to pay punctually, or on the forbearance of his creditor. With all his calculating powers, it was not in Adam's power to estimate exactly the immense expenditure, or the sacrifices requisite to obtain funds: he had continued the work in faith and love, his mind fixed on the result, without a thought of his own future lot. Once embarked, he should continue at any cost; and thus to secure the co-operation of the proprietors along the canal, he was obliged to cede to them the privileges granted by royal favour, merely reserving a small revenue for himself, how often encroached on we may imagine, when the recipient was one who could never bear to exact a tribute from the poor man's olive-tree, or set a price on the water that refreshed his corn. He had erected corn and oil mills on different favourable sites, rationally expecting from their profits to meet his pecuniary engagements; but his creditors, well aware of the advantage within their grasp, allowed no time for them to work, and forced him to give these up to them also.

He was overwhelmed with law-proceedings, on account of certain informalities in the deeds of conveyance of the lands for the canal, so that, at length, harassed and weary of all this contention, he cut the Gordian-knot; and on condition of being relieved from all embarrassment, signed a deed of renunciation of all his rights and royalties in favour of his creditors, stipulating only that they should bind themselves to preserve the canal in good order—a superfluous clause, as it was their interest to do so—and receiving in return a voluntary testimony to his worth and their ingratitude, in a small pension securing him barely a subsistence for life.

Yet they could not wring from him his brightest treasure—his accomplished work: the smiling harvests, the clustering vines, were all his own in the noblest sense, meeting his eyes on every side, and filling his heart with gladness; the poor of the land were his children, and to them he had secured its fertility as a heritage for ever. We may almost imagine the quiet smile with which he signed the deed which thenceforth shifted all the trouble on his persecutors, and left him nothing but the joy. From that moment he returned in peace to his books and to the study of various similar projects of usefulness, tracing, amongst other plans, the line of the canal of Languedoc, a precious document in after-years to Paul Riquet, who had the glory of executing this great work.

He was thus happily occupied when he received a royal command to proceed instantly to Nantes, and report on some public works then under the execution of Italian engineers. Information had been given that the work was defective in foundation and construction, and its fate was to depend on Adam's decision. He quitted his beloved retirement with regret; but there was no disobeying the king's mandate. At a glance, he perceived that the foreign engineers were in fault, and frankly told them so, adding with pain the king's order, that the fortress should be demolished. The Italians tried all their arts of persuasion to induce him to alter his decision, endeavouring to work on his well-known humanity by representing the injury this report would inflict on their character and future career. But he could not traffic with his conscience, though he endeavoured to mitigate the result of his sentence by promising by his interest to procure them employment on another work.

This, however, was not what the Italians required; rendered exigeant by the patronage of Catherine de Medicis, and determined not to be foiled, they judged of Adam's character by their own, and having heard of his pecuniary difficulties, dared to offer him a considerable sum of money as an inducement to alter his report. He was seized with violent indignation at this unworthy proposal, but, mastering his feelings, he calmly replied: 'Had you known anything of my life, you would have spared me this insult, for then you would have been aware that gold has no value in my eyes, unless it is honourably acquired and spent in the cause of humanity. I must obey my orders, and unless monsieur the governor, who is daily expected from Paris, brings contrary directions, the citadel must be demolished.'

The governor of Brittany had been invited to court, along with the other provincial governors, to assist at the fêtes given in honour of the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth with the king of Spain. Their fatal termination is well known; at a tournament, Henry II. received a wound from the lance of the Comte de Montgomery, of which he expired in a few hours. Catherine de Medicis being declared regent, ordered the governors to return immediately to their provinces, to be on the spot in case of any seditious movement; and on the very evening of the day on which Craponne had held the above conversation with the Italian engineers, he received the news of the death of his royal patron, and of the governor's return.

No contrary directions had been received, and, according to the late king's command, an order was issued to commence the necessary demolition on the following day. The engineers having no further hope, conceived the horrible idea of revenging themselves on him whom they could not corrupt. The crime of poisoning, hitherto almost unknown in France, was now become frequent, the Italians by whom Catherine de Medicis was surrounded having introduced this perfidious weapon of destruction.

Thus the engineers, having once entertained the idea of vengeance, considered this their surest means; and visiting Craponne on pretence of ascertaining the governor's decision, they contrived an interview with his servant, and gained her over to their designs. The wretched woman, fascinated by the glittering bribe they spread before her eyes, consented to mix the poison in her master's drink, and, after a few hours of intense suffering, the beloved benefactor of Provence breathed his last in the fiftieth year of his age; his last words were of forgiveness of his murderers.

As may be supposed, he died unmarried; the name has since existed only in the grateful memory of his country. King Henry III. took the Canal de Craponne under his especial patronage, and decreed that none of the lands fertilised by its waters should be taxed more heavily than heretofore. Thus, for more than three centuries, a new life has been given to that locality. Thanks to 'the poor man's friend,' though by the sacrifice of all he possessed, magnificent harvests now wave on that soil formerly covered with weeds and briers; and the name of Craponne is preserved amidst the blessings of those he snatched from the horrors of want. In 1818, an inscription was engraved on the rock of Pie-Berand, where the waters of the Durance first flow into the canal; it recalls, in touching words, the former destitution of those countries, and the praise of him who fertilised them. In 1820, a subscription was opened, and a medal struck in his honour; it bears, on one side, a likeness of Adam de Craponne, and on the reverse this inscription:

> Dix-huit communes des Bouches du Rhône
> Lui doivent la fertilité de leur territoire.

Finally, now that each locality vies in rendering honour to its illustrious departed, it was only to be expected that the generous and devoted Craponne should not be forgotten in the tribute which posterity delights in paying. The communes watered by the canal voting the requisite funds, a fountain, surmounted by a bust of Adam de Craponne, and remarkable for the elegance of its construction, and for the abundant flow of its waters, derived from the canal itself, now decorates his native town, and thus suitably perpetuates the memory of the benefactor of Provence.

HOW TO TURN AN HONEST PENNY.

'EUREKA! Eureka!' cried I, as I tied on my bonnet, and, braving a violent hail-storm, rushed down High Street. I was one of a *corps dramatique* who, for a month past, had been endeavouring to obtain a living in a city in the north of England, striving gallantly against the distaste of its wealthy aristocrats towards theatrical amusements, and the extreme poverty of its working-classes. The last plank to which we clung had just been shivered! Hitherto, we had persuaded ourselves—human nature *will* hope—that our benefit-nights would indemnify us for previous losses; but on assembling at rehearsal-time, we ascertained that our manager had 'flown away on the wings of the morning,' or, to speak less poetically, had left town by the 6 A.M. train, taking with him his scenery and wardrobe. Here was a blow! We were now completely on our beam-ends! What became of my fellow-performers, it is not the purpose of this paper to tell, neither had I opportunity of inquiry on that point, having sufficient food for the mind at that time in ruminating on my own individual difficulties. I was in a strange place, and moneyless, with no situation available for a circuit of sixty miles round; three weeks' rent were due, three young children were looking up to me confidingly for bread—this was the position in which I, their mother, found myself; how to get out of it was the important question which presented itself for consideration. I sat down to reflect; and casting my eyes on the floor—a habit to which I am prone in time of trouble—I perceived a scrap of newspaper lying at my feet; it had enveloped my last half-ounce of congou. Mechanically, I took it up and read it; it was a paragraph from a critique upon Mrs Dexter's lecture on Bloomerism. 'Eureka!' I had found it!—found the solution of a most uncomfortable riddle—*I would lecture too!* There were, to be sure, a few obstacles in the way, which, to a person in less desperate circumstances, might have appeared insurmountable; but I have ever proved that there is a world of truth and wisdom in the old familiar proverb, 'Heaven helps them who help themselves.'

Relying with implicit faith on this golden line, I resolved to surmount all difficulties. Summed up, these appeared to me the chief—first, I had no money to defray the incidental expenses; second, I had no lecture, and no data to aid me in the composition of one; third, it was very uncertain whether I *could* compose one, all my attempts in the way of pen-womanship having been confined to an epistolary correspondence; fourth, I knew nothing whatever about the new-fangled costume, and was, consequently, uncertain whether I ought to speak *pro* or *con.* Regardless of the driving hail, to which the thin texture of my old black mantle hardly served as a non-conductor, I scudded along. Anon my steps were arrested by the welcome apparition of a glove-box in a draper's window, bearing, on the lid, a coloured lithograph of a veritable Bloomer. With an eye to business, I took stock of the costume; and with an intuitive dislike to the un-English-looking pantalettes, resolved that my lecture should be *anti*-Bloomer.

My nerves were somewhat fluttered as I entered the shop of the printer who had been employed for the theatre, but having introduced myself and explained my views, I requested to be informed what public institution would be best adapted to the occasion.

'There was but one,' he said, 'ever frequented by the *élite* of the city—a friend of his was its custodian.'

For this friend he sent post-haste, in order to consult him on the subject. He came. He was a loquacious hairdresser, who raised every objection to my project that lay in his power—he 'must have the fifteen shillings' rent before the doors could be opened.'

The printer, who was confident of a good attendance, proffered to become responsible for the amount demanded.

This objection removed, the hairdresser cudgelled his brains to find another; whilst I looked across the street at the large tickets ostentatiously displayed in the baker's window, reminding me that flour was three shillings per stone—of which interesting fact I was but too well aware.

'Pray, ma'am, is your lecture in favour of Bloomerism?'

'No, sir,' I replied; 'I take the other side of the question.'

I found that, with this unlucky answer, I had locked, double-locked, and bolted the doors of the Literary Institute against myself. The gentleman whose province was to deal with the outside of heads, insinuated his belief that I was a fool; adding, that it was quite certain that, in less than three months, every woman in the United Kingdom would have taken to the new style. His surprise was extreme when he learned that the lecture was not yet in being. 'Who was to write it, then?—me?'

Being answered in the affirmative, he gave a significant glance of contempt at my shabby bonnet and muddy shoes, and, without further comment, walked away.

The friendly printer then advised me to try my fortune in a small town six miles off—Whyton-le-Brook, where, at Banks's Hotel, there was a commodious justice-room, which was frequently let for balls and concerts. Before I left the shop, I made out a copy of a bill, and gave an order for two hundred, to be printed immediately, and sent off to the bellman at Whyton, for distribution. I also wrote to the hotel-keeper, desiring him to let me have the justice-room for the Thursday evening (it was Tuesday when I wrote).

On my return home, I inspected the contents of my half-empty trunk, which bore strong marks of having sustained a protracted siege by the demon Poverty, who had thoroughly ransacked it, and borne off to temporary captivity its principal tenants—my best dresses. From what remained, I selected a black velvet robe, some remnants of satin, and a few other trifling articles, such as I fancied might be used with advantage for *the* dress. Then, committing my children to the care of my landlady, I set out to walk to Livingstone, some twelve miles distant, where I had an acquaintance, a young *modiste* of exquisite taste, who, retaining a grateful recollection of a few days' assistance that I had given her in the busy summer season, would, I knew, cut out my dress, and help me to make it. Margaret was delighted to see me, and prepared tea while I explained my project. After tea, the dress was cut out. We both set to work at it with right good-will; and in listening to my friend's cheering conversation, I almost forgot the fatigues of the day. At four in the morning, so sleepy that we could no longer see to thread a needle, we retired to rest, rose again at seven, and stitched furiously until all was completed. A black velvet tunic, braided with blue satin ribbon, blue pantalettes and waistcoat, a black neck ribbon, a turn-over collar, white gauze scarf for the waist, and a white satin hat of prodigious magnitude, formed a very picturesque *toilette à la Bloomer*. Margaret declared that it was 'a love of a dress,' and wondered what I should find to say against it; and from the bottom of my heart I wished I could tell her.

After partaking of a hurried dinner, I turned my face homewards. A more windy and rainy afternoon I never encountered; it was near the close of November, and that proverbially dreary month did not belie its character. Quickly as the storm would permit, I trudged along, my bundle under my arm, my cherished satin hat pinned to the lining of my mantle. Every now and then I peeped to see that it was safe; but, behold, just as I got into the town, I found that it had come unfastened—it was gone! It was impossible to guess how many leagues the wind might have carried it. Search was useless, I knew; so, with a sigh of regret to its silken memory, I hastened home. My youngest darlings were snugly ensconced in their crib; the eldest boy was sitting up, keeping a good fire for 'poor mamma.' I am but a slender person, of delicate health, and now that the necessity for immediate exertion was over, I felt that I was completely exhausted—spirit, not bodily strength, having supported me during the unwonted wear and tear of the past eight-and-forty hours. My landlady insisted on my going to bed, and taking a basin of gruel and nitre, to stave off the cold and hoarseness that already began to manifest themselves. I complied, and a short sleep refreshed my weary limbs. When I awoke, I resolved there and then to commence writing my lecture, so I lighted the gas, wrapped myself in my dressing-gown, and tried to compose my thoughts. Possessing no work on female costume, no books of any description, except a few plays and an old *Mangnall's Questions*, I had to draw heavy drafts on my imagination, my memory, and what little learning I had acquired during an eighteen months' residence at a tenth-rate boarding-school. A tolerable sentence occurred to me for the opening of my address, and having conquered the great difficulty of *beginning at the beginning*, my pen went jogging along pretty smoothly. A luminous idea just flashed across my mind, when out went the gas! My landlady had turned it off at the meter, little thinking how I was employed. 'Eh, bien! revenons à nos *moutons*,' said I, as I rummaged in the cupboard for a half-penny candle, by whose light I 'put my discourse into some frame' before I again retired to rest. The next morning, I revised and copied—very roughly—what I had written overnight. I had also to fabricate another hat. The afternoon was clear and frosty; and with my eldest son, a boy of seven years old, to carry my parcel, and officiate as door-keeper, I walked to Whyton-le-Brook. The audience was both fashionable and numerous, and the night's receipts exceeded my most sanguine hopes. My hearers were liberal in the matter of laughter and applause; whether deserved or not, I cannot say, for all that I can remember of the lecture is, that it concluded somewhat after this fashion: 'Ladies, I merely assume the Bloomer garb in order to give you an opportunity of judging for yourselves whether you would choose to adopt it; for myself, believe me, *I* have not the slightest intention of wearing it, save on such occasions as this; and I do sincerely hope that in the present modest and becoming attire of Englishwomen (*N. B.* the crinolinomania had not then broken out;) that Mrs Dexter may not be *dexterous* enough to effect the revolution she anticipates; that Mrs *Knight's dark* suggestions may be *made light* of; and that the *American originator* of this innovation may be left *blooming* alone! Then

The wide-frilled trousers,
The enormous hat, the 'broidered tunic,
Yea, Bloomerism itself, with all its trappings,
Shall dissolve, and, like other defunct fashions
Leave not a rag behind!'

A few days afterwards, great was my surprise, on looking over the *Sunderland News* of December 3, 1850, to see a lengthy, humorous, clever, and, at the same time, most charitable review of the lecture. Encouraged by this, I lectured for five months on this subject, by which time it was losing its interest; and being then in a part of the country where I could easily procure a theatrical engagement, I resumed my usual employment. I cannot resist making mention of a few suggestions thrown out by friends in the course of my tour: one was, that I should introduce the song of 'Who dat knockin' at de door? De Bloomer;' another, that I should drag in texts of Scripture; and a third, that I should, towards the close of my discourse, by a special contrivance termed a *strip-dress*, appear instantaneously in a neat English garb. During my progress through the country, I made my courtesy to a great variety of audiences: to young girls at a boarding-school—to an assembly of Quaker ladies—to a large party of collegians and their relatives—and, at Snigg's Foot Inn, Ludgate Hill (a village in Northumberland), to a number of farmers, with their families and servants, who began to assemble full two hours before the time appointed, and who mustered in such force that the lady of the house sent the waiter with her compliments to the *Bloomerism*—meaning me—'and would she object to preach in the kitchen? there were so many hearers come that the big parlour wouldn't hold 'em.'

WASTE.

THE troubled sea around this Isle of life,
Who dares explore?
Its waves of baffled love, of ceaseless strife,
Break on the shore,
All darkened with the Christ's antitheses,
Incarnate ills,
Whose miracles change health into disease,
Whose touching kills:

If these be not thy making, let them go,
Nor grieve too much;
Waste not thy strength in unavailing woe
For any such;
But—while the helping-hand, the guiding brain,
Are fully wrought,
And while the tears that fall for others' pain
Are seeds of thought—

Leave to a deeper Love the tears of care
Thou canst not dry;
Be tranquil, to tranquillity add prayer,
But no vain sigh.
Strength, ever grappling with *all* human woes,
Soon loses breath;
But Strength, requickened by divine repose,
Endures till death.

R. R.

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ACROSS THE WORLD.

Anchored off Margate—our first night at sea. The town-lights gem the blackness astern with a cluster of dim, fallen stars, and make us long for the warm, welcome, and warm hearth of home. Now in a monotonous patter, anon, in a stinging, slanting shower, the rain rattles on the tarpaulin over the main hatchway. A few water-proofed intermediates, shunning the discomfort of the 'tween-decks, where chaos still is regnant, slouch, smoking, along the sodden deck—looming through the murk, in their strange swathings, like ghosts of polar bears. Somebody is singing a drearily comic song in the saloon, the swaying lamps of which send a broad patch of bilious-looking yellow across the damp ropes hanging and coiled about the mainmast. A dead sheep, dangling from the gallows, puts on a suicidal aspect when the sickly lustre shimmers over it. The watch are clustered about the galley, the fire of which the sleepy, sulky cook is just about to quench. The moan of the foul wind is fast rising into a roar, broken every now and then with a wicked wolf-like howl, as though the hungry gale grew impatient for its prey. Most of us, in mind or body, are sea-sick already.

Morning. With limbs cramped by our coffin-like bunks, wherein all night long we have pitched up and down, rocked *out* of slumber; with heads sore with blows against the side, and aching through sleeplessness and steaming stench, we hurry upon deck, to let the wild rain beat refreshingly upon our brows, and stretch our legs as far as the rolling ship will suffer us. No messes have been formed. Each man gets his own tea from the galley, and perched, with the most woe-begone of looks, on box or barrel, sops his biscuit, and thinks dolefully of the cozy breakfast that only yesterday—what a time ago it seems!—he took on shore. The poor women do not so much as pretend to eat. Nausea and nostalgia combined have converted even the neatest, handiest, prettiest, kindest of them into selfish, tallow-faced, helpless sluts. When a moment's respite permits them to raise their heads for a moment from their basins, they bitterly reproach their husbands for having lured them on board-ship; pray, with a plaintive absurdity, to be put that instant ashore; and snub, with all the energy their debility allows, the pale, scared children that wail around their crumpled skirts. Cœlebs, seeing Benedick made nurse to the luckless brats—with one to dress, another to dandle, and all to watch—repeats his vow that he will die a bachelor. Married men have the advantage over us on shore, perhaps; but any one who has noted the mute despair that clothes their countenances when they are clumsily tending their wives and families at sea, knows well that then they envy, with a fiendish jealousy, our 'single blessedness.'

Now the rain comes down less massively. The sky is no longer a full sponge, but a smudged slate. Fiercer than ever, however, the wind roars landwards —'a mighty rushing wind'—with a multitudinous sound of wings, as though the angels that kept not their first estate were hurrying to their doom. Our top-gallant-masts are struck, and we are just about to let go another anchor; for every time the good ship rises from the leaden, white-maned billows that welter towards the town, as if they meant to bury it in their gloomy maws, the jerking cable sends a shiver through her from stem to stern. Suddenly, the strong chain snaps like a silken thread—sixty fathoms are gone; the remnant, with a dull, dolorous thud, heard even through the roaring of the gale, beats idly against the bows. The ship broaches to; the women, with mad screams, and the men, with ashy faces, watch her, a mere log left to the mercy of the cruel waves, fast drifting on to a lee-shore. Half a score of the luggers that have been skimming through the scud like Mother Carey's chickens, manned by brave fellows on the look-out for such a mishap, are instantly down upon us with their help. Fortunately, we do not require it. Skipper, mates, and crew leap like maniac monkeys to the forecastle —round goes the windlass; the second cable is paid out, and we bring up—a good deal nearer Margate than we were a few minutes before, but still all safe and sound.

One of the luggers comes alongside, carrying away our starboard whisker with her mainmast. One of the strange, stiff bundles of sou'-wester and tarred oilskin that constitute her crew, manages to scramble on board—a huge, jolly fellow, with a damp-dimmed shiny face like moist mahogany, whom we instantly christen Mr Peggotty. He has lost his voice; and it is hard to keep from laughing at the small whisper that comes from that mighty frame—like a mouse creeping out of a mountain, when he inquires whether he shall bring us off another anchor and cable. The captain goes ashore with him to make the purchase. The weather has moderated, when the boat returns with its bulky freight, the coils and protruding flukes of which make it look like a fanged Typhon. We ship and fish the anchor without trouble; and next morning weigh its fellow, and stand blithely southwards, cheered by the pure air and mellow sunlight of a bracing October day. Sad signs of yesterday's gale, however, do we see as we sweep along;

fragments of spars; boats bottom upwards; a man's mangled arm still holding a handful of sea-weed in a death-grasp, two brigs, a schooner, and a bark high and dry upon the beach—their shattered, water-whitened sides looking like ribs of carcasses that wolves have picked. We run so near the land, that we can plainly make out the dark pointers, with their noses down and tails up, in the yellow stubble; the foxhounds sweeping down the side of a green hill, followed by their red-coated cavalry; the ploughman turning up his furrow with flashing share, attended by grave, sleek, clerical-looking rooks in quest of the cool, pink, radish-like earthworms, which, also, we almost *fancy* that we can see. The country gleams fresh after the late rain. The villages smile so peacefully that it is hard to realise that their houses rocked yesterday beneath the storm, that the flying spray sprinkled their Michaelmas daisies with salt dew, and the shrieks of drowning men came through their shuddering lattices. Everything is so full of quiet beauty, that, 'cabined, cribbed, confined' as we are, we envy the free-roaming sportsmen and rustics, and long for a run on shore.

As we go, we heave the lead; a very green youth amongst us imagines that the man in the main-chains is angling for the missing anchor, and when he begins to haul in the line, exclaims exultingly: 'Charley 's got it, Charley 's got it!' The wind falls foul again. Weary board after board we make, but all to no avail. Beaconed Dungeness stretches out, like a giant's arm with a bâton, to bar our progress. With some hundreds of other ships—most of them with battered bulwarks or truncated spars, shewing traces of the recent gale—we are compelled to bring up in the Downs. It is a calm, clear night. A long line of lights shews where Deal stretches along the shore. The waves splash drowsily, as if tired out with havoc; the wind moans sadly, as if penitent for the evil it has done. With their voices is blent the wild wail of the bugles, floating over the starlit waters from Walmer. The morrow is Sunday. Every ship's flag flies half-mast high. On the staff above the gray old tower, England's standard droops in heavy folds. Through a glass we can make out the dark-coated riflemen, with arms reversed, keeping sombre sentry over the corpse of England's greatest captain. In that stern old castle rest the ashes of Arthur Wellesley, awaiting their burial amid the manly sobs and proud tears of the nation that he saved. One exception only is there to the reverence which the fleet, anchored before his coffin, pay to his remains; the French tricolor is chivalrously lowered, but the stars and stripes, with vulgar insolence, are run up to the peak. Off again at last. Dover's windows flash in the sunlight like laughing eyes as we run by. Dungeness in vain holds out its rod; ship after ship, like rebellious boys mocking a paralysed schoolmaster, trips saucily past the impotently extended arm. On the morning of our second Saturday at sea, we are hugging the Devonian shore—its hills, like wakening beauties, smiling good-morrow to us, as they lay aside their gauzy coverlets of gold-embroidered lavender. At noon we cast anchor in Plymouth Sound.

Here we have to wait three days for cargo, mails, and Channel-dreading passengers. An eager rush is made for the shore and the post-office. Our letters read, we ramble through the quaint old town, quite proud of the nautical roll that our nine days' voyage has given us. It excites the satire of the small boys, who pursue us with derisive inquiries of, 'How many days out from Blackwall?' &c. Two of us, however, are fortunate enough to be taken for real sailors. Entering a church on Sunday, in our rough sea-going toggery, we are left, of course, as St James does *not* direct, standing, and looking very foolish, in the aisle. But presently an old lady in mourning totters out of her pew, with a tearful hearty 'Come in here, my dear boys; my poor Tom was a sailor!' We gratefully take the seats that the kind old soul proffers us, but feel, with much compunction, that we have obtained them under false pretences.

During our three days' stay, we exhaust the lions of Plymouth, Devonport, and Stonehouse; and to make amends for our late 'hard tack' and 'salt horse'—salt, with a slight flavour of beef, is the best description of the marine *pièce de résistance*—we gorge ourselves with 'soft tommy' and roast goose. On Monday afternoon, we weigh again, and are standing out to sea, when a boat, fiercely pulled, overhauls us. A bailiff clambers up the side, and after briefest explanation, carries off one of our number, who has remained *perdu* in his cabin during the whole time that we have lain in port. His poor wife and children are left pennyless, to get on as well as they can by themselves in Australia. A little further on a boat shoves off from a smack that is lying to, and brings us, to make up for our late loss, a gentleman who has equal reason to dread bailiffs, but who has been more fortunate in shunning them. England skimmed off a deal of its social scum in 1851 and 1852—shot a vast quantity of its rubbish at the antipodes during the continuance of the gold-fever. With a few exceptions—to parody Coleridge—

We were a *blackguard* crew!

The 'rough,' the cyprian, the *roué*, and the 'slippery fish' elements greatly predominated. Pugilistic costermongers, brandy-loving penny-a-liners, actresses of doubtful reputation, rouged ladies, about whose character there could be no doubt at all, young fellows reeking from London cider-cellars and continental casinos, military adventurers, with morals in an inverse proportion to their moustaches, fraudulent insolvents, Irish rebels, and London pickpockets, are only a few of the uncomplimentary categories under which I could class the reputable lot with whom I sailed to Melbourne. Scamps and demireps though we be, however, we bid farewell to our natal shores with most decorous sentiment. Inspired with patriotism by British beer, we muster on the poop, and sing *Isle of Beauty* in grand chorus, as momentarily the blue hills fade, and Eddystone's star glances with a keener brilliance through the gloaming.

'In the Bay of Biscay, O!' The sea, but in no proverbial sense, makes mountains of molehills. There is no sweep in the waves; they plump up perpendicularly—irregular cones—black boils sloughing in scummy foam. Over them the ship jolts like a cart in a ploughed field. The most intensely nautical of us now give in; a perpetual volley of sea-sickness runs rattling round the 'tween-decks. The saloon cook enjoys a sinecure. Those of us who do not keep our berths, hang over the bulwarks, with dizzy brain and lack-lustre eyes, longing to drown our troubles in the seething main, and wondering if, under such circumstances, suicide be sin.

But the horrid bay, with its lumpish waves and leaden sky, is crossed at last; beneath a sapphire heaven, we get into the long swing of the Atlantic billows. Sickness is over and past, and the time for the singing of songs is come. Seasoned for the voyage, we attack with appetite the 'lobscouse,' that a day or two before would have given us, in the expressive Scotch phrase, 'a scunner,' light our pipes once more, play chess and cards, and make the calm evenings merry with tripping dance and trolling glee. We fancy that we are *old* bears now, but soon find that we have plenty of troubles yet to come.

Black, filmy, ragged clouds, like torn cobwebs, suddenly fringe the horizon; swiftly they mount and meet, shrouding the whole vault in gloom. The far-off sea is crisped by the coming gale; the mate has hardly time to cry: 'Stand by the royal halliards!' before the storm is on us. The royals fly in rags from the bolt-ropes; hailstones, big as plums, smash every pane in the cabin sky-lights; the lightning writes its awful zigzags on the darkened heavens; the thunder rumbles and re-rumbles round; the mainyard snaps in the slings like a brittle twig; tacks and sheets fly hither and thither, doubling like lithe whip-lashes, as the bellying and collapsing sail, with a noise loud almost as the thunder, flaps in the furious blast. Children are caught up by frantic mothers, and pitched down the hatchway, as fear-maddened folks throw their china out of window at a fire. Male passengers are knocked down like ninepins, as, in response to the skipper's 'All hands on deck!' the watch below comes tumbling from the forecastle. The ship reels to and fro like a drunken man—nothing can beat the scriptural simile—and shudders every second minute as if she had been stung. We breathe again when they get the canvas off her; but all night long she creaks like a crushed basket, and plays a charivari peal upon our pots and pannikins that murders sleep.

We speak the first sail we have sighted—a little schooner that has lost her longitude. We chalk the information she requires on a black-board, and hang it over the side, and ask her to report us at home 'All well.' The women follow her wistfully with their eyes as she dwindles in the northern distance; so do the men who are unmanly enough to remember they have mothers.

The next day, we pass Madeira. A cloud of silver tissue veils the island; a glorious rainbow spans the cloud; a bride at the altar smiling through her tears is what the sight suggests. Beyond the island, a golden haze broods on a golden sea; the craft that dot it have an unreal, ethereal look; they shimmer like phantom barks seen in a poet's dream.

On the following Sunday, in the evening, we have service for the first time. The reading-desk is a harness-cask, but the union-jack laid over it conceals its common-place vocation. The ship's bell tolls us to our seats—boxes and barrels—on the maindeck. A few irreverent sinners prefer the 'gallery,' as they call the poop, whereon they sit kicking their heels and smoking their pipes like heathens. But even these look serious when, in the hush of the 'purple twilight,' pierced here and there by a silvery star, the beautiful words of the Book of Common Prayer are read, and the psalm floats out upon the slowly surging and unfoaming waves.

Within the tropics. The decks sweat tar; the skin peels off our noses, decorating their ends with fantastically curled shavings. Shirt, trousers, and straw-hat are now the wonted wear. Everybody gets rid of his whiskers, and cuts everybody else's hair. It is prime fun to watch the operation. The barbee, seated on the bulwarks, grins savagely at each dig with the scissors that the rolling ship compels the barber to inflict, but consoles himself with the thought that it will be *his* turn next to torture. Effervescing beverages fizz all day long. Picnic parties are made up for the maintop, where pale ale, pipes, and lazy chat, beguile the sultry hours. Beneath the awnings, lounge gamblers and novel-readers, almost too listless to play or turn their pages. You marvel that the sail-maker, perched amongst his heat-reflecting canvas on the long-boat, is not scorched to death. Hundreds of flying-fish flash silvery from the dazzling water, and then drop into its cool depths again, sending up jets of rainbow-tinted spray. A few fall on the deck: we eat them, and find them—despite the poetical look of their glassy wings, azure back, and silvery belly—exceedingly like prosaic herring. A young shark takes our bait. Maugre his tender years, a more fiendish expression than he owns, I never saw. Original sin must stain fish as well as men. Inborn rascality gleams from the devilish eyes, and curves cruelly in the horse-shoe mouth of the finned baby. Him, too, when fried, we eat, and consider him like fried sole. 'Porpoises, porpoises!' shouts a man on the forecastle. 'Porpoises, porpoises!' echoes and re-echoes every one along the deck. We run forward, and see the brown-black shoal shooting athwart the bow, now cutting the water like ploughshares, their dorsal fins just above the foam, and now playing leap-frog, like boys let out of school for an unexpected holiday. One of the crew is an old whaler'sman. He takes the grains, and plants himself upon the martingale stay. Whizz goes the lance with unerring aim, but the shaft snaps short: the wounded fish departs with the iron in his side, marking his track with blood. His comrades give their tails a 'Don't-you-wish-you-may-catch-me?' twirl, and dive down to Thetis with the story. We manage, however, to grain plenty of bonito—a beautiful fish, glistening like polished silver—a delicious one, too, for it eats like carp. Mackerel is the flavour that the 'Committee of Taste,' as Professor Owen would say, assigns to a dolphin that we catch and cook. Its colours, when expiring, greatly disappoint us: a partially cured black eye would be almost as appropriate a simile as 'parting day,' so far as *delicacy* of hue is concerned, for the 'dying dolphin.' When *our* day departs, when the brief twilight changes almost instantly into mellow darkness, lit by the blue trembling splendour of tropical stars, the best of the twenty-four hours begins. On the poop there is a concert; on the maindeck, a mad masked-ball; a judge and jury club, surrounded by grinning tars, holds its sittings on the forecastle; lovers, affectionate, but hardly as innocent as doves, bill and coo in every corner; sea-struck youngsters gaze out upon the darkling waters, firmly believing that yon far-off light they see, just on the line of the horizon, belongs to a pirate that is fast bearing down upon us. Valorous are the resolves of these sucking sailors. 'We must all lie down behind the bulwarks, you know,' says little Dick to little Tom, 'then jump up, give three British cheers, and board him!' The boatswain, a weather-beaten man-of-war's man, feeds their appetite for adventure with wild yarns of sea-life. I only remember two of his tales. 'I was a-sailing with "Mad Charlie" [Napier] once,' he says. 'He had the *Thomas* frigate then. Well, we was a-practisin' at the guns, and a man got blown away whilst he was a-rammin' home the charge, 'cos his mate forgot to put his finger on the vent-hole. "You son of a sea-cook!" cries Old Charlie, "you've sent a man to the devil! Put him in irons!" And then at night, to cheer us like, he gives us double grog, and makes us go a-whoopin' round the ship like so many savenges. He *was* a rum un, was Old Charlie!'

Another time, the boatswain tells us, he was returning from Newfoundland. In the midst of a dense fog, he fancied that he smelt ice. All at once the mist lifted, and right ahead he saw two icebergs—one black as night, and the other clad by a few stray sunbeams in a robe of rainbows—rapidly nearing each other. The ship had just time to shoot between them, when, in the boatswain's phrase, they came together 'like no end of broken bottles,' strewing the sea with their glittering fragments. If the old Greeks had ever ventured into the Atlantic, I should think that such a story had originated the myth of the Symplegades.

To sleep in a berth now is simply impossible; you might as well try to sleep in a brick-kiln. On long-boat, spars, and poop, on main-deck, and on forecastle, we lay our mattresses, grateful rather than otherwise when a passing squall gives us a slight shower-bath. One ought to have sweet dreams, considering the lovely sights on which the eye closes: a pearly sky sprinkled with fleecy clouds, like handfuls of fresh-washed wool: the broad moon, seemingly twice as high as in more temperate climes, silvering the swelling sails, and paving the gently heaving waves with trembling gold; proud Orion standing out clear in the clear heaven; all the stars floating like gold-fish, not driven in like brass coffin-nails, according to their English look.

Delicious is the bath in the big tub or lowered studding-sail in the morning! You feel your nerves being braced like screwed fiddle-strings, and put on your shirt at peace with all the world.

Long calms, and close, cloudy weather, only compensated for by some drearily magnificent sunsets. The heavens one dull leaden hue, save for a chaotic strip of lurid, *hopeless* light. Again, the west is heaped with clouds—the dark, like smoke, the yellow ones, like flame. London, magnified a thousandfold, seen burning from Bankside, will give a notion of their dismal grandeur.

Disgusted with the little progress that we make, we all grow quarrelsome. One of the gallant soldiers in the saloon threatens to pull the chaplain's nose—the chaplain being a poor meek Methodist missionary, not able to say 'Boh!' in a colloquy. In the 'tween-decks, the women 'fuff' at each other like cats; the men keep up a long low growl like sullen mastiffs. On the forecastle, there is a regular row between the carpenter and the mate; whilst they are fighting, a chum of the carpenter's, who has a grudge against the mate, strikes the latter from behind. There is almost an open mutiny now. In vain does the captain talk of putting the man in irons: the rest of the crew declare that, in that case, they will knock off, and leave the passengers to work the vessel. All this time, the heavens have been gathering blackness, the thunder is rolling, and the lightning flashing round the vessel. A tropical storm bursts on us in its fury. The rain comes down in bucketfuls. This brings the men to their senses, and they flee to shorten sail. 'Luff, luff!' shrieks the skipper, pumping his arm like one possessed. The ship trembles in the wind as if she were frightened.

It is suddenly so dark that you can hardly see the men lying out upon the yards. Like a shattered sun, a mass of lightning swoops from the zenith into the seething sea—for the reverberated crash that follows, I can find no simile.

The 5th of November, and still north of the line! Mercury at 100 degrees in the shade on Guy Fawkes's Day! Copper-coloured clouds of miasmal mist from the African coast—dropping ever and anon lukewarm unwholesome tears—wreathe us around; a murky sky *canopies* us; the leaden sea heaves sluggish as the Styx. Despite our doleful surroundings, however, we manage to get up a little fun. A live Guy is carried round the ship, with braying horn, 'Remember, remember,' and Protestant and patriotic cheers. In the afternoon, a shark, fifteen feet long, preceded by four pilot-fish, swims up to a butter-tub that we have thrown overboard: not being able to make a meal of that, he next rubs his ugly snout against a bait of pork upon a shark-hook; but all four of his attendants anxiously nudge him in the side, to intimate that their lord is in danger, whereupon his *Longness* gives a sidelong, cunning glance at us with his cruel eyes, as though he said: 'You can't do me—but won't I serve you out for trying, if I catch any of you?' and goes off about his business.

Eight bells is just about to strike, when a pistol fires, and 'Ship ahoy!' is heard beneath the bows. The mate runs forward—holds a brief parley with the hailer—orders the mainyard to be backed, and Neptune comes on board. The skipper having been summoned to receive the customary hearing, and give the usual information, the shaggy bearded divinity intimates his intention of returning on the morrow, to celebrate his equatorial rites at 2 P.M. He is sorry, he adds with politeness, that he cannot name an earlier hour, but this emigration worries the life out of him—there are such lots of vessels to visit. I may mention, as a curious philological fact, that Neptune talks with a strong Irish accent.

He comes back, according to his promise, with Amphitrite, Triton, doctor, barber, clerk. Tar and something else unmentionable form the lather for crew and obstreperous passengers; flour and treacle for willing victims amongst the latter. Those who propitiate the deity with libations of rum, are merely sprinkled with salt water, and sworn in as special constables, to aid in carrying out his decrees. As usual, there are three razors, of various degrees of serratedness. Of course, as has been the custom from time immemorial, the brush—about the size of a small hearth-broom—is dabbed into the mouth of any unfortunate rasee who is simple enough to open it to answer a question. Of course, also, all the poor wretches are ducked and well drenched subsequently with showers from pail-and-fire-hose-holders posted in tops and rigging. A battle-royal with buckets, in which all participate, concludes the ceremony.

At nightfall, Neptune's flaming car is lowered to the waves. Its red, smoky glare contrasts strangely with the silvery moonlight, as it rushes past the side. They shake the ship up into the wind for a minute, to let it pass. For half an hour we watch it rising and falling, falling and rising, now blossoming out in crimson like a monster peony, now nothing but a flame-streaked wreath of smoke. It dwindles, dwindles into a bright-yellow speck, and disappears about five miles off like a setting star.

We have sighted and spoken so many ships that we are almost too lazy to get out the signal-box or hail. Yankees we have long given up having anything to say to, knowing well that they will not return our courtesy. One that lay by us for three days in a calm, notwithstanding all our efforts to open a communication with her, preserved a rigid, supercilious silence. Americans are jealous of England's supremacy at sea, and strive to hide their envy by affecting to look down on English ships and sailors.

We see the Southern Cross for the first time, and are rather disappointed by it, thinking that it ought rather to be called the Southern Kite. Those beautiful patches of star-dust—the Magellan Clouds—quite come up to our expectations; but, on the whole, the southern heavens, save in their liquid clearness, do not seem so glorious to us as they have been represented. The stars straggle more than in the north, and some part of the sky is so thinly 'inlaid with patines of fine gold,' as to have the dreary look of tenements to let.

Whales flounder round us in their unwieldy gambols, and send up their silvery jets; kingly albatrosses float on their broad pinions after us for miles, and when the sea is calm, and the ship, with reef-points pattering on her sails like rain, rolls like a log upon the lazy swell, the trustful birds fold in their double-jointed wings, and swim up to the side for the crumbled biscuit that we fling them, as fearless as the water-fowl in St James's Park. Regardless of the Ancient Mariner's fate, we cruelly bait hooks with bits of red cloth—an irresistible lure to an albatross as well as a young lady—and drag the poor deluded wretches floundering on board. Their webbed feet supply us with tobacco-pouches, their flesh—that we may say that we have eaten everything we caught at sea—we jug, and try hard, but don't succeed in the attempt, to think it like jugged hare.

The graceful Cape pigeon—driven snow striped with jet—begins to flit about us. Every now and then, tangles of sea-weed float past. We are nearing Table Bay, where we mean to anchor for water. I am awaked at dawn by a rush upon deck. 'Breakers ahead!' rings in shrill terror down the hatchway. Every berth in the 'tween-decks instantly vomits its pale tenants, who surge pell-mell up the ladder. Sure enough, our bowsprit is running right on to a white wall of foam. The officer of the watch was drunk, the men, even to the helmsman, were fast asleep. Had it not been for the chance vigilance of a passenger, we should have gone plump upon Dassen Island. When we wear, you might almost pitch a biscuit from the stern into the seething snow.

A short time afterwards, beneath a scorching African sun, we are gliding past Robben Island, mad with pleasure at the thought that in half-an-hour's time we shall be on shore. Like the skeleton at an Egyptian banquet, a bark with only her tops above the sparkling water, damps our glee. She tried to enter the bay last night, we find, was dashed on Robben Island; and of all she carried, but one man and the captain, with a dead child in his arms, were washed alive to land.

Sandy hills upon the left; in the far distance, the mountains of the interior, tumbled in a glorious chaos of pink, purple, lavender, and gold; on the right, the couchant Lion, and Table Mountain, with its snowy table-cloth just peeping over its brim, and tiny, white Cape Town at its foot—built seemingly of cards. Ships of every build and flag, draped in a dazzling, Turner-justifying haze, throng the bay—towering amongst them, the tall spars of a Dutch man-of-war, that frowns at the fort as Bertram on Ellangowan's height must have frowned on Glossin. Wherries, newspaper-boats, and fantastically painted fruit-boats, pulled by darkies, with oars lashed to single tholes, hover round us like midges, as we let go our anchor. But it is not until the health-officer has been on board that we are allowed to hold any communication with the shore. The wherries that we charter reach the jetties long before his galley. Oh, how delightful, after our cramped walks from stern to stem, it is to feel that we may ramble *miles* now, if we please. How odd it seems to have firm walking-ground beneath our feet! And how strange appears everything around us: the quaint, gabled or flat-roofed houses, with Dutch announcements—looking very much like misspelt English—in their windows, and rows of green trees pleasantly checkering their white walls; geraniums and rhododendrons growing wild; the market heaped with fruit at Christmas-time; fresh figs and apricots, plentiful as home potatoes; tobacco at a shilling a pound; wine, ninepence a bottle; porter, a shilling a pint; teams of eighteen oxen, driven by Fingoes—aided by little Hottentots, who guide the leaders by thongs fastened to the horns—dragging wagons, cumbrous as those that carried Jacob and his goods down into Egypt; eight mules, with cream-white harness, drawing one covered van; pompous old Dutch burgomasters, before whose dread approach the little naked niggers, crouching on the pavements, uncurl and scamper off like sow-bugs; darkie maids and matrons, with brilliant bandanas on their heads, rolling the whites of their eyes, baring their glistening teeth, grinning and chattering like monkeys; male darkies, busy doing nothing, punctuating their jabber with a perpetual 'Yah, yah;' Caffres just caught, fine, noble-looking fellows, seven feet high, marching off to prison under the escort of British redcoats of five feet eight; grave coolies in baggy breeches and bee-hive hats; men, women, and children, indeed, of every clime, for Cape Town is a 'house of call' for all nations.

Picnics at Constantia, and excursions to the top of Table Mountain, cricket-matches, 'darkie hops,' and supper-parties, are the order of the day and night. There are two thousand Australian emigrants on shore, and confident that we have only to put out our hands to get money when we reach our destination, we sensibly get rid of nearly every farthing that we have. A nice sum must have been spent during the stay of our little fleet. The Cape Towners might well say that surely we must be returning from, not going to, the diggings!

After leaving Table Bay, we—my original 'we'—get sadly tired of one another and the voyage. It has no longer any novelty to amuse us with, and we know all one another's stories. We care not for cards, scout chess, disdain to dance or sing; eat, drink, and smoke in sulky solitude—in one word, make ourselves as selfishly disagreeable as we can.

During our last week at sea, however, our interest in one another revives: we wake from our apathy, and discuss our 'prospects.' I am amused to find that almost every one with whom I talk has views as vague as mine: he is quite undecided as to whether he shall turn parson, or become, without a metaphor, a shepherd; go to the bar, or wait behind one; edit a paper, or hawk it about the streets; manage a firm, or drive a dray-horse, or go to the diggings. Like all 'new chums,' we are a comical set of combined Micawbers and Mark Tapleys—sanguine in our expectations that something excellent will 'turn up;' and if it doesn't, determined to be 'jolly under creditable circumstances.'

The day before we sighted Cape Otway, we buried the young Scotchman who had come half round the globe in fruitless flight from death. Almost hourly, ever since we left Cape Town, he had grown weaker and more wan; but his hope held out bravely. He was sure to recover, he said, if he could but once breathe Australia's balmy air. Consumption plays with its victims like a cat: just when he thought he was going to escape, it struck him down for ever.

I was with him the night he died; it was, I think, the saddest vigil that I ever kept. The water 'poppled' mournfully against the side; the last revellers had turned in, and, in the gloomy hush of the 'tween-decks, every creak of the ship's timbers sounded like a groan. A slowly swaying lamp cast a dim light on the clammy brow of the sick man, as, soothed by no kinder care than my rough tendance, he lay moaning in his narrow bunk, in the close 'hospital berth.' Poor fellow! his thoughts flew homewards in his sleep; a smile flickered over his face, and I heard him murmur 'Mother!' It was heart-sickening to see how the smile faded when he woke—to mark the startled, disappointed look he gave when his eyes fell on me—and to hear him gasp—oh, how drearily—'Eh, mon, I thocht I was in Scotland!' Five minutes afterwards his eyes closed again, in the sleep that knows no waking.

On the evening of the next day, the corpse was taken from the long-boat, where, silent and solemn amid the blithe bustle that always precedes 'making land,' it had lain since morning, covered up with flags. A rusty cable-link was fastened to the feet, and with the union-jack for pall, the body was carried to the starboard gangway. On one side of the sloping board on which it lay, stood the mate, with a look of unwonted seriousness upon his ruffian face; on the other, the carpenter, who was about to launch into the sea the *three hundred and sixtieth* corpse that he had seen thus buried! Crew and passengers gathered round with uncovered heads. The sun was low, and tipped the waves with crests of fire. A few snowy sea-birds—dazzlingly white when they flashed athwart the crimson sunshine—wheeled round and round, uttering their low hoarse wail. That cry, the monotonous dash of water at the bows, and swirl along the sides, as the ship cantered easily over the billows, and the voice of the chaplain reading the burial-service, were the only sounds which broke the hush that reigned from stem to stern.

'Luff!' cried the captain. The helmsman shook the ship up into the wind. Amid a loud flapping of canvas, the solemn farewell was read—'We commit his body to the deep.' There was a sullen plunge, and then the sails filled again; and in an hour's time the moonbeams were playing miles away above the 'wild, wandering grave,' where love can never sit and weep. Loneliest of burials is a burial at sea! The pathos of it invests the most common-place person with poetry. He has become one of the myriad secrets of the mysterious main. He is gone, in a far more emphatic sense than those who lie within the church's shade. Every Sunday we read their epitaphs, and seem still in a vague way to be near them. But not a trace of him is left. Somewhere in the weltering ocean that wraps the world, he slumbers all alone. The vastness of his tomb oppresses the imagination; its vagueness chills the heart. We have no definite spot to wreathe our memories around, and to decorate with pious flowers.

Next morning, we are up betimes. The ship and boats have been painted; the masts have been scraped; the cables have been heaved and hooked up from the hold, and lie, sprawling and rusty, along the deck. The sea-weary women lean longing over the bulwarks; the men cluster like bees in the tops and on the shrouds. But the gong sounds for breakfast before land is seen. We have hardly time to help ourselves to 'twice-laid,' however, before 'Land, ho!' shouts the look-out on the main-top-gallant yard. 'Land, ho!' a moment afterwards echoes his mate upon the foremast. 'Land, ho-o-o-o!' runs growling round the ship from the gruff throats of the watch. Plates and pannikins are pitched away, and we explode rather than run on deck, to catch the first glimpse of our Canaan.

Far away on the larboard bow, a patch of faintest blue floats on the deep-blue waters; it is hard at first to keep the cloud from melting into the sky; but gradually the outlines become firmer—the headland assumes the look of something embossed, not lightly painted on the heaven; and soon we are running along a coast that we can plainly make out to be wooded. As the sun goes down, we take our pilot and enter Port Phillip Heads. On the following morning, we bring up finally in Hobson's Bay.

A damp mist dims every sight and dulls every sound; the white light-house at Williamstown gleams spectral through the fog; the hundreds of big, black, deserted craft around loom like ships that have drifted with the dead to shores where all is dumb.

Hushed Hobson's Bay seems a strange portal to the maniac bustle of Melbourne.

A ROMANCE THROUGH A BEDROOM WINDOW.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—THE WINDOW.

In the window itself there was nothing remarkable; it was an ordinary French window—difficult to open, difficult to shut, and secured by a complicated iron fastening—such as may be seen on the fourth floor of any hotel in France. So, when the host of the Hôtel du Grand Cerf directed my attention thereto, it was not so much the window as the view to be seen from it that he wished me to take notice of.

'There, monsieur! There is what makes this apartment so cheap! Not such another view as this in all the city!' and throwing open the window, M. Bouvin pointed to the Grande Place below, with the air of a man who feels confident that his last argument is irresistible. 'See, monsieur, what life, what movement! Truly, one can never be dull with such a scene to look upon. Yes, without doubt, monsieur is right. The chamber *is* high, and one mounts ninety-five steps in ascending; but then the view—ah! that repays all. For me, I should never tire of beholding the beautiful tower of St Basile yonder, or watching my neighbours go in and out of Madame Risdeveau's restaurant. There it is, monsieur—"La Toison d'or," opposite, with the gilt letters on a white ground.'

But I was not in a mood to enter into these ecstasies; I was hot and cross, worn out with travelling, and suffering from a neglected sprain. So I quickly came to terms with M. Bouvin, cut short the enumeration of the beauties, advantages, and comforts I had secured to myself, and despatched him in quest of a doctor to examine the injured limb.

The result of the examination was not of a nature to allay my irritation of mind. The doctor informed me that I must keep my room for some days, and not stir beyond its precincts until I had his permission; otherwise, a severe lameness might follow. To my intense disgust, I was obliged to concur in the reasonableness of his advice, and give my word that I would not attempt to leave my room until his veto was withdrawn.

When the door had closed on M. Sangsue, and I was left alone to reflect on my position, I began to inspect the apartment with much interest. Walls, a faded blue; floor, red, and of well-waxed tiles; furniture, white; small bed in alcove; large easy-chair by side of bed; Napoleon in council-chamber, attended by kings, over the fireplace; Napoleon in tent, studying map of Europe, opposite; time-piece, pointing half-past seven, on mantel-piece; time-piece, indicating midnight, on the drawers; three feet of carpet near the bed; three feet of carpet near the window; a jar of dried rose-leaves, and a draught-board.

It was not a lively prospect for a solitary tourist, who did not know a soul in all L——, and who might be dying of ennui ere one of its fifty thousand inhabitants would offer to relieve his solitude. I had calculated on *doing* this charming old city in a couple of days; but here I was, cooped up in a preposterous apartment, neither sitting-room nor bedroom, on a fourth floor, with no more chance of using my legs than of flying, and unable to make any acquaintance with this picturesque town, except through a bedroom window. Ah, M. Bouvin, my host, did well to draw my attention to this same window. What a view! I sat gazing out on roofs, spires, towers, and a stretch of hills beyond, gleaming in the sunlight, till I forgot my weariness and imprisonment. I fell asleep and dreamed of the window; I awoke and found it more attractive than ever.

The summer twilight was deepening into night, and lights were glistening here and there about the square. Up to my window rose a cheerful hum. All the world of L—— seemed to have turned out of doors. Middle-aged matrons, responsible-looking fathers, smart nurses, gay children, the ferocious gendarme, the amiable grisette, the priest and the soldier—all were there to enjoy the cool air, listen to the band playing under the cropped lime-trees, and taste the charms of society.

What an animated picture they made up, stamped with the true French air of life and gaiety. I watched the shifting groups, the twinkling lights, the gradual blending of all colours into one neutral tint, until the moon peered above the roof of St Basile, and the little fountain in the Place grew silvery in its ray. Then, the band having taken its departure, I closed my window, and the play was at an end.

Next morning, I learned from the waiter that it had been the fête of St Léger the previous evening. 'But we have the band every night,' added Pierre; 'and if monsieur has the misfortune to be lame, he will find it a distraction to have this little gaiety in an evening.' I assented thereto, and felt that my fate might have been worse.

The first day, then, of my confinement, time did not hang heavily on my hands. Whenever the French newspaper brought on an attack of fidgets, there was my window to turn to. But towards the end of the third day, I began to grow weary of my observations, and found myself becoming acquainted with all the shiftings and changes of this panoramic view of L—— and its inhabitants. I knew that at six in the morning all the old women of the quarter would go clumping along to the fountain in wooden clogs, in search of their daily supply of water and gossip; at seven, the bells of St Basile would ring for matins; and at eight, a blaring of trumpets would wake me from a doze, as the cavalry regiment from the *caserne* rode through the square. Then, I could calculate to a nicety the hour at which the three priests—one long and two short ones—would issue from a door in the wall of the neighbouring college, and disappear, with a train of young students in their rear, under the shadow of the porch of St Basile; while as for the exits and entrances of the nurses and children, the time for the appearance of the *beau-monde*, together with the band, the *polichinel*, and the evening-bell—I knew as well when to expect them all, as if the good city of L—— had been some monstrous mechanical toy that was wound up overnight, and went like clock-work for the whole day long.

Seeing this, I found my third day of imprisonment dragging slowly to an end. Watching the light fade off the pinnacles of St Basile opposite, and feeling gloomily certain that I could predict in advance every occurrence of the next hour, my eye suddenly caught the flutter of something white up at one of the narrow windows in the tower. I thought I could make out the outline of a woman's figure in the shadowy nook, but it was growing dusk. The figure, whatever it might be, disappeared, and a few minutes after, I beheld a girl of graceful form issue from the church porch, and descend the great flight of steps into the square. She hastened quickly along the pavement, stopped before a large dull-looking house—the shabbiest, perhaps, in the whole Place—and, entering the arched doorway, was lost to my sight. The next minute, an old man of stooping figure, carrying a violin case under his arm, followed on her steps; then a light shone out from a window on an upper floor.

Every night I had remarked a light in that same window, long after all the other houses were closed and darkened. Hitherto, I had taken no particular notice of the fact, supposing it to be the chamber of some student or sick person; but now I began to speculate on the matter with lively interest. The light continued to burn long after all others were extinguished; nay, it was still there when, in the middle of the night, I rose from a sleepless bed; and I watched it, as I lay, growing pale and sickly before the dawn.

The next day, I observed the old house in the corner of the square with close attention. It differed from its neighbours chiefly in that the lower floors were all shut up, and only the upper rooms inhabited. It had a dull, secretive sort of look, that gave an edge to my curiosity. Who was that young girl I had seen last night gazing at the sunset from the window in the tower? Was she the daughter of the old man who entered the house after her? Why did that light burn there at those unholy hours? Were alchemy practised in these days, I should have set it all down to that mysterious science, and concluded that the old gentleman I had seen was endangering the lives of his neighbours, and doing injury to his own health, by sitting up over his crucibles and furnace when he ought to have been in bed. But as the middle ages were at an end, I was obliged to seek some other explanation. Perhaps it was the home of a sempstress, and, to earn bread for her father and herself, that beautiful girl—I knew she was beautiful, from her very air and movements—sat there, night after night, 'sewing a shirt and making a shroud.' But no; her appearance was not that of a sempstress, and L—— was not London.

At seven o'clock in the evening, I saw the door of the gloomy house over the way open in a cautious, quiet way, and beheld the old man beckon a hackney-carriage from the stand near. He darted back again into the house, and returned with a violin-case, which he deposited in the carriage; then he reappeared with the young lady, and they drove quietly away. About midnight, they returned home; and again, as during their absence, I saw the light gleaming from the upper window.

The next morning, my eye caught the following paragraph in the *Courrier de L——*: 'OPERA.—The night of the 30th July just past will be ever memorable in the lyric annals of L——. Never since Madame Pasta charmed our good citizens in 18—, has so great a treat been offered them as was afforded last night by the young *débutante* who appeared in *Lucie de Lammermoor*. Her exquisite voice, a pure soprano,' &c.

Was it possible that this was my incognita?—Yes; I did not doubt it for an instant. There, in that gloomy old house on the other side of the square, dwelt the young girl who had roused all this enthusiasm in the critic. And now, perhaps, the mystery of the light was explained. The hours when all the city was quiet and at rest, had been devoted by the young *artiste* to preparation for her *début*. It was evident that her success was the topic of the day in L——. Pierre, the waiter, and M. Sangsue, were both full of it. 'The most extraordinary thing about it,' said the latter, 'is, that no one has ever heard of this wonderful singer till last night. She has dropped down amongst us from the clouds. There run a thousand reports: she is Italian, she is German, she is English. No matter, she is a true genius, whatever she be; and monsieur must make haste to get well to go and hear her.'

But my doctor shook his head on my proposing that I should do so that very night, and, I believe, left orders with Pierre to use force, if necessary, to prevent me leaving my chamber. When evening came again, and the setting sun flamed meteor-like in the windows of distant houses, and all the gilded vanes shone out like stars above the churches, I saw the figure of the young girl once more up at the window in the tower. Still as the statues in the niches near did she stand, with hideous faces leering at her from spout and gargoyle, and the flush of sunset on her white robe. Her hands were clasped together, and her gaze, stretching above the roofs, was fixed on the horizon. Was this the spot in which she offered up her evening-prayers? or did she only seek a purer air, a deeper quiet than could be found below? Perhaps in that boundless view and glorious sunlight her soul drank deep draughts, that sustained her through the heat and burden of the day. That solitary tower might be to her a Pisgah, from which she caught the glimpses of some far-off Canaan.

The night had flung its shadow over the tower, when I saw her slowly descend the great flight of steps that lead into the Place, pass quickly into the street, and so glide quietly away to her home.

From that day, the identity of the new singer with my recluse was established in my mind beyond doubt. Every night that it was announced that Mademoiselle Darron would appear at the opera, the hackney-coach stood at the door of the gloomy house over the way; while, on other evenings, the visits to St Basile were paid as before. How long I continued to observe all this, I do not recollect. I know that my imprisonment was prolonged far beyond the period my doctor had first assigned, and that the injured limb still tied me to my chair. Meanwhile, the light burned nightly in the garret-window opposite; the dull house preserved its air of secrecy; and rumours of Mademoiselle Darron's talent and beauty were continually finding their way to my solitary chamber. Thus stood matters when an incident occurred which gave a new and startling interest to the proceedings of my neighbours.

One moonlight evening, exhausted by the heat and glare of a long summer's day, I had fallen asleep in my chair by the window. When I awoke, the clocks from the various steeples were just striking twelve. One after another, they clanged out into the night, some with brazen, some with silvery voices, and then, as the sound-waves died off on the purple air, the silence grew stiller than before. Gazing out dreamily into the moonlit Place, I was suddenly startled by a sight that roused me to wide wakefulness. There was *something* creeping along the roof of the gloomy house on the opposite side of the square—something that crouched and crawled along stealthily in the moonlight. Now, it was hidden in the shadow of the high chimneys; now, it was gliding along the very parapet. Suddenly this shapeless mass arose, and revealed the figure of a woman. There, on a mere ledge of stone, she stood looking down fearlessly into the square. The figure tossed its arms wildly above its head, as if in glee; and then, through the still night-air, came a loud discordant laugh. My breath came quick as I gazed at the apparition. A few moments dragged on, and then I beheld another figure glide along to the woman's side, lay a firm grasp on her robe, and bear her away through a window in the roof. They disappeared. The moon shone peacefully as before. All was still, save the splash of the fountain under the lime-trees; and a few minutes after, I half doubted whether I had not been dreaming.

Indeed, so improbable did all this seem to me next morning, that I attributed it to the disordered fancy of one suddenly roused from sleep, and, as such, determined to forget all about it. It could not have been many days after, when my doctor gave me permission to leave my room.

The first use I made of my freedom was to hasten to the booking-office of the opera in the Rue Hérold, and secure a stall for the evening. The salle was crowded when I took my seat at night; but amongst all the excited spectators, not one perhaps awaited the rising of the curtain with such anxiety as myself. As I confidently expected, Mademoiselle Darron and my mysterious neighbour were one and the same person. I recognised her instantly. When the burst of applause that greeted her appearance had subsided, she commenced her first air. From that moment, I was all ear. Never did soul speak to soul as through those tones. It was the voice of a thrush, guided by human sense and feeling—clear and liquid as the outpouring of a bird. I listened with a delight and agitation I could not control. In the grand scene at the close, all the powers of the actress were developed. She rose with the part, until a picture of heart-broken woe, that had all the terrible truth of reality, was presented. Even now, I cannot think of it without emotion. I left the theatre in a glow of enthusiasm.

Too excited to retire for the night, I walked up and down under the lime-trees, recalling the powerful scene I had witnessed. Every time I heard the sound of wheels on the rough pavement of the Place, I expected to see Mademoiselle Darron and her father (from his tender solicitude, I knew the old man could be no other) return to their home.

At last they came. I crossed the square, and was near enough to their door when they alighted to see a tall, masculine-looking woman, with gold ear-rings, and a high-crowned cap, holding a light in the entrance. I could hear Mademoiselle Darron's voice as she addressed her:

'Well, Marthe, we are home again, and so tired!'

The light shone full on her face; it was pale and jaded, but beautiful as ever. They passed in quickly; the door was hastily closed, and I heard bolt and bar drawn within. The last echoes of their footsteps died away in the house; but I stood there still in the shadow of the doorway, haunted by the vision that had suddenly risen before me of that strange figure I had seen wandering on the roof.

Was Mademoiselle Darron a somnambulist?

CHAPTER II.

THE MIDNIGHT INTERVIEW.

My long confinement had rendered the four walls of my chamber on the fourth floor of the Hôtel du Grand Cerf so irksome to me, that I spent the whole of the following day in the open air. Even when evening had given place to night, and the world of L—— had forsaken the promenade on the Grande Place, I still remained out under the stars, loath to exchange the freshness of the night-breeze for the stifling atmosphere of my room under the roof.

I was watching the gradual disappearance of all the lights from the upper windows—all save one, which kept its nightly vigil as of old—when the sound of a door opening attracted my attention. It was M. Darron coming out of his house, with his cane in his hand and a cloak over his shoulder, as though prepared for a midnight walk. He crossed into the middle of the square, and began pacing up and down under the trees with slow and stooping gait. He had gone backwards and forwards many times, when he approached the fountain where the grim water-god in the centre sat pouring a noisy stream from his urn. The old man stood and gazed into the dark pool before him, with his elbow resting on the ledge of the basin. Suddenly, I saw him bend down his head, and heard him weeping. There was something very sad in the sight of this old man's grief. I should have withdrawn, had it been a stranger thus revealing some secret sorrow; but my long watchings and silent interest in M. Darron and his daughter seemed to have established a sort of tie between us, and given me the privilege of a friend. It was therefore without hesitation or reflection that I gave way to the impulse upon me.

'Monsieur Darron,' I exclaimed, going quietly up to him, and placing my hand on his arm, 'your grief pains me. Tell me, can I help you? I am not so great a stranger as you suppose.'

'Who are you? What do you mean? How comes it you know my name? Monsieur, this intrusion is an offence!'

His eyes grew fiery in the dark; his voice shook with anger.

The presumption of my conduct had, in a moment, become clear to me. I attempted no common-place apology, but told him of my long confinement to my room, of the observations that had grown out of it, and the process by which I had come to a knowledge of his name. When he heard this, he grew calmer. 'The eccentricities of a sick man must be pardoned,' he supposed. 'An invalid was glad of any resource for killing time, and therefore monsieur had taken a fancy for studying the habits of a neighbour so insignificant as himself.'

'Not only from the idle curiosity of a sick man,' I replied, 'had I watched my neighbours. I might' ——

'What! had I other motives—secret ones? Speak out! What did I know?'

M. Darron clutched my arm fiercely; but I replied that I knew nothing but what was the result of conjecture; and that as for my motives, they were to be found in the interest—a most friendly one, I would presume to say—that I felt in himself and his daughter. As I spoke, M. Darron looked fixedly at me. After a minute, I could see his face relax in the uncertain light.

'Then I am to believe, monsieur, that you possess a nature so benevolent as to induce you to seek my acquaintance because you have seen me in distress to-night? Well, a man who offers his sympathy as you have done, should not be judged harshly. I am no close discriminator of character I fear'—he heaved a sigh—'and it would be a poor triumph to deceive me. You are a stranger too, if I mistake not?' And the old man, in whom there seemed a strange blending of shrewdness and simplicity, seemed desirous to put aside the distrust with which he had at first viewed me. We moved away to a bench near, and sat down.

'You have seen my daughter, then! You know her! Is it not truly a marvellous genius?' The mention of her name had roused his enthusiasm in a moment. 'Ah! she deserves the homage of the world. My Josephine! She is more to me than you can conceive. Monsieur, the world knows her not. It sees in her only the first artiste of the opera; but *I*—I know her as the angel of my home, the devoted daughter of the poor old violinist, whose seat in the orchestra is only allowed him because he is her father. Ah, monsieur, she is God's best gift to me, and yet—yet He sometimes afflicts us most through those we love best.'

He ceased, and sat tapping his snuff-box lid, sighing deeply from time to time. Once or twice, in the desultory conversation that ensued, he appeared on the point of communicating something to me, but a nervous restraint seemed upon him, and he would stop speaking quite suddenly. After a short time, he rose, bowed a hasty good-night, and moved off in the direction of his own house.

I was about to return home likewise, when I noticed something lying on the bench by my side; it was M. Darron's snuff-box. I took it up, and ran after him across the square; but his door had closed upon him ere I reached the house. I knocked; the door was immediately opened again, and M. Darron stood in the entrance, looking angry and surprised at seeing me there. I explained matters, and handed him the box. He thanked me politely, wished me good-night, and shut the door again. I heard him draw bolt and chain, listened to his retiring footsteps, and then moved slowly away. I had got a few paces from the door, when there came a loud, jarring fit of laughter from within the house. It was the wildest, most unearthly sound I ever heard. The laugh was repeated, and then a window above was hastily closed. I shivered, as though a sudden ice-blast had passed through the summer night.

THE ANATOMY OF TIME.

PART II.

In our former chapter, we considered the two natural divisions of time—namely, the day and the year. We now come to consider the others, from the month to the second.

These we have called arbitrary, but by that term we meant to indicate only that they are not exact measures of any physical phenomena. We did not mean to say, and, indeed, it would be absurd to suppose, that they were originally fixed upon altogether without reasons. Reasons of some sort there must have been for the determination of them. We shall see, as we go on, if we can discover these reasons.

First, then, of the month. Why should the year be divided into twelve months, rather than into any other number of months? Some imagine that they were so divided from a mystic importance attached to the number twelve. It is true that in Holy Writ twelve appears to be one of the significant numbers: thus, there were twelve tribes under the Jewish dispensation; under the Christian, there were twelve apostles: we find in the Apocalypse that the number of them that were sealed was twelve times twelve thousand. Nor is it impossible that among the Chaldeans, Arabians, and Egyptians, some tradition may have been preserved, however much its true import may have been forgotten, in which the number twelve was consecrated. It may have been preserved among the priesthood at least, and the priests it was who were the first regulators of time-measures. Certainly, throughout profane history, down to the present day, it is a number which, curiously enough, meets us at every step. It is, however, much more likely that there is mere coincidence here; that the synodical revolutions of the moon round the earth, there being twelve of them in a year, gave rise to the duodecimal division of it; that it was this division, supposed erroneously to be a natural one, which made the number to be considered sacred; and not the sacredness of the number which led to the division being adopted. There was some error in supposing that twelve lunations make up a year, for they fall short of it by eleven days; but we must remember that the true period of the earth's revolution round the sun, or of the sun's apparent motion round the earth, was a thing not known, popularly at least, in ancient times; and that the tendency of those times would be to accommodate their measure of the year to the number of the lunations, and make the close of it exactly correspond with the close of the twelfth. We may remark that the idea has been preserved in our very word month; a month being a moon.

We have just said that the number twelve, the mystic value of which, among the heathen, we would thus account for, meets us at every step; and we shall point out some instances in which it does, although we may thus seem to be led away for a moment from our proper subject. For, rather strange it is to see how much we are affected by the moon, not only on a great scale, and as regards the tides, for instance, but in the smallest matters and the common things of life. The school-boy, to whom 'multiplication is vexation,' little dreams that if his table extends to twelve times twelve, and does not stop at ten times ten, he has to thank the wandering orb of night for it. The eleventh and twelfth jurymen, as they take their places in the box, with the dreary chance before them of being locked up till next day, in a dismal lodging, and without any board at all, never think that it is Diana, and not Themis, that they ought to blame. Change for a shilling?—twelve pence. In troy-weight, how many ounces to the pound?—twelve: and in the same measure, the grains making a pennyweight are twenty-four, which is twice twelve. There are twelve inches in a foot. We have a simple round term, a noun, to express twelve, which is more than we have for ten—we say a dozen. And so on with other measures, and in many other matters, both native and foreign, ancient and modern; constantly we find twelve and its multiples turning up, and all, we say, owing to the moon.

But, coming back to the month, let us shortly consider, as we did with regard to the days of the week, the origin of the different names by which the months are designated. They are all derived from the Latin. Beginning with March—because by doing so we find a key to several of the others—we recognise in it the month of Mars. Now, in the barbarous times represented by the mythic Romulus, the year seems to have been divided into ten months only, the first of which was named after Mars, the reputed father of the Romans. Counting from this month, we have the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth months, in our *Septem*ber, *Octo*ber, *Novem*ber, and *Decem*ber, respectively. And in the earlier Latin, the fifth and the sixth months were called Quintilis and Sextilis—their more recent names being given to them out of sycophancy to Julius and Augustus Cæsar. Then, again, when Numa, the regulator, the law-giver, the civiliser, shortened each of the old ten months, and added two new ones, so as to divide the year into twelve, the name of Janus, the double-faced god of the Italians, was given to the first; and appropriately enough, as, from his configuration, he might be supposed the fittest personage to look forward on the coming year, while at the same time, and without turning his head, he could look back on the bygone. We may observe, also, that Janus was represented with a key in his hand, and twelve altars under his feet.

February is derived from an old Latin word indicating that in it was held the great festival of purification and expiation. April comes from *aperio*, to open, because in the month of April the earth begins to open for vegetation; such, at least, is the etymology commonly given. Only May and June thus remain to be accounted for, the root of neither of which is very clear. The latter perhaps owes its name to Juno: Ovid expressly says it does; indeed, he makes the goddess say so herself. But in another place he derives the word from *junioribus*, as he does May from *majoribus*—etymologies which are neither philological nor poetical, but simply absurd. May, most probably, took its name from Maia, who was the mother of Mercury, though comparatively an obscure goddess in her own right; the reason possibly being that she was sacrificed to, on the first of the month.

In treating of the names assigned to the months, we are reminded of the silly attempt made by the French, at the time of their first revolution, to introduce a new calendar on what they considered philosophical principles. About as short-lived as their republic was the innovation; but the period was a most important one, and as the nomenclature of the time is constantly met with in the history of it, a few words on the subject may be acceptable. Here, therefore, is the foolish system of those revolutionists; essentially foolish, because it was an attempt to alter what was established, and found to work well, by the common consent of the civilised world. They took the 22d September 1792 as the commencement of their era, that being the date their republic was formally established; hence such dates as the year III., IV., and the rest: they are still to be met with frequently on the copper coins current in France. The year was divided into 12 months of 30 days each, with five intercalary days. The week was altogether abolished; and the month was divided into three *décades* instead. The names of the months in their order, and the approximate English meaning of them, were as follow: it will be observed that the terminations varied in triplets, according to the seasons:

Autumn.—Vendémiaire, vintage-month; Brumaire, fog-month; Frimaire, frost-month. *Winter.*—Nivôse, snow-month; Pluviôse, rain-month; Ventôse, wind-month. *Spring.*—Germinal, seed-month; Floréal, flower-month; Prairial, meadow-month. *Summer.*—Messidor, harvest-month; Thermidor, heat-month; Fructidor, fruit-month.

The days of the décades were called Primidi, Duodi, Tridi, Quartidi, and so on; and the intercalary days, which received the elegant name of Sansculottides, were consecrated to the festivals of Genius, of Labour, of Actions, of Recompenses, and of Opinions. Finally, the days, instead of being dedicated to saints, were dedicated—if in this case we may use the term—to useful vegetables and domestic animals; as the turnip, the pig, and so forth.

We now come to the week. This division of time was unknown to the Greeks; by the Romans it was first observed—nationally, that is to say, for the Christians of the empire had of course observed it for nearly four centuries then—not before the reign of Theodosius I. The orientals, however, had recognised the week from time immemorial, attended by the idea of a seventh day to be held as holy; it was a religious tradition that seemed to have come from the very cradle of the human race. Some have thought, that as the month was most probably taken as a measure of time because of the moon's revolutions, so her phases might have given rise to the division of the month into four. On the other hand, it may be said, these phases were as patent to one part of the world as to another. It is, however, certain that in all eastern countries a sacred or mystic character has always attached to the number seven; and that even in the west, though not employed till a late period as a measure of time, it was all along regarded as bearing something of the kind; and this feeling, it may be remarked, was doubtless strengthened by some accidents which we may point out. It is one of the tendencies of the human mind—a fallacious tendency, indeed, for the most part, and, as being such, ranked among the Baconian 'Idols of the Tribe'—to assume that a certain degree of parallelism and uniformity runs throughout all nature, and the importance attributed to the number in question was thus singularly fortified by certain coincidences, imaginary and real. So, for instance, the colours of the rainbow were believed, though erroneously, to be seven in number. The intervals of the minor diatonic scale in music are seven; and corresponding to these, and 'still quiring in celestial harmony,' so as to make 'the music of the spheres,' there were, it was thought, just seven planets; and this fancy it was, we may now remark, which was the direct origin of the Latin names assigned in the time of Theodosius to the days of the week, and enumerated in our former chapter; the Sun and the Moon, Mercury and Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, being supposed by the astronomy of that time, and indeed of much later times, to revolve round the earth as a centre. We need not say that we have changed all that; and that the music of the spheres must really be a much more complicated affair than ancient philosophers imagined, seeing that there are now some sixty performers in the ethereal orchestra.

With regard to the remaining divisions of time—that is to say, the hour, the minute, and the second—we have but few remarks to make. The hours are twenty-four in number; twelve having been assigned to the day, and twelve to the night; which rude arrangement affords another example of the preference shewn for that number. Once more that preference is exemplified in our division of the hour into sixty minutes, and of the minute into sixty seconds. This is a comparatively modern arrangement; but it proceeded from the old division of the circle into 360 degrees; that, again, depended upon the number 60; and 60 seems to have been made a chosen number from its being the lowest common multiple of 12 and 30—the number of months in the year, and the number of days in the month. We shall only add, with regard to these small divisions of time, that the French, although they have introduced—and with great advantage too—the decimal system into all their other measures, whether of money or of length, or of weight or of capacity, or of scientific values, have not ventured to interfere with the common clock, which still ticks its defiance of innovation or reform, and strikes triumphantly at the sixtieth, not the hundredth minute; as clocks, we suppose, have done since clocks first were.

This brings us to the end of our proper subject. There are, however, some signs and terms connected with the calendar, and usually to be met with in our almanacs, of which it may not be amiss that, in treating of time-measures, we should say a few words; especially as the import of them is not, we believe, very commonly understood, and to some they may even appear of a suspicious and cabalistic character. We refer to the Epact, the Lunar Cycle, the Solar Cycle, the Roman Indiction, the Golden Number, and the Dominical Letter.

The Epact.—This somewhat mysterious-looking term is simply a derivative from a Greek word signifying to intercalate, and signifies nothing more than the moon's age at the end of the year. The only use of it is to adjust the lunar to the solar year throughout the

Cycle of the Moon—a period of nineteen years, after which the new moons come back to the same days of the months, only about an hour and a half earlier in the day; so that in general, on whatever days the new moons fall in any year, they will fall on the same days nineteen years later. The number of the year in this cycle is called the

Golden Number, as deserving to be written in letters of gold, because it determines on what day of the month Easter-day shall fall. Thus, the present year is the seventeenth year of the lunar cycle, and seventeen is consequently the golden number for it.

Cycle of the Sun.—This, again, is a period of twenty-eight years, after the expiry of which the days of the month throughout the year return to the same days of the week. It is obvious that but for the intervention of leap-years, this cycle would consist of only seven years.

Roman Indiction.—This was a period of fifteen years used by the ancient Romans, though for what exact purpose is not now known. It is still used, however, by the ecclesiastical authorities of Rome, who date their acts according to the year of it.

Julian Period—the product of these three cycles multiplied by each other (19 x 28 x 15), and thus amounting to 7980. It had its imaginary beginning 710 years before the creation, so that we are now only in the 6572d year of it. When, in the year 3267 A.D., this period shall be completed, the three cycles will start together again.

We shall now close with the Dominical Letter. The 1st of January of every year is denoted in the calendar by the letter A, the 2d by B, and so on, till the 7th is denoted by G; after which we go back to A for the 8th, and so on again through each week, till we come to the end of the year, when the 31st December will be denoted by A. Now, the letter which stands against all the Sundays of the year (Dies Dominici) is called the Dominical Letter for that year. Thus, as the present year began on a Saturday, that day was denoted by A, and the letter for the year is consequently B. There is an exceptional arrangement in the case of leap-years; for in them the letter is changed at the end of February, moving a letter backwards, as from C to B, from B to A, or from A to G; so that every leap-year has two dominical letters; and these, next year, which will be a leap-year, will be A and G. There is a rule, rather a complex one, by which the dominical letter for any given year may be found; and another by which, the dominical letter being thus found for it, we can readily compute on what day of the week any day of any month in that year fell or will fall; but these we do not give, as our object at present has merely been to explain what the symbol means.

THE CLIMBING CLUB.

If it was reported to us that the Andaman islanders, who, we are informed upon good authority, reside in trees—the upper classes upon the less elevated boughs, and the lower, like the 'Baby Bunting' of our own nurseries, 'upon the tree-top'—had instituted a Society whose object was that of climbing, and whose merit was that of having climbed, we should at once acknowledge its fitness and applaud its founders; but when we hear that a Club of this character, with the simple substitution of mountains for trees, has a local habitation as well as a name among ourselves, in London, the news does take us a little by surprise. When we remember, however, that at each of the various schools where our youth was passed, there was always one boy at least, who preferred getting over the wall with the broken glass upon it, to going through the open gate, and to whom the water-spout on the house-side was a recreation-ground, our wonder diminishes, and we can conceive how this matter comes about. Out of one hundred and fifty of such boys, let us suppose one hundred fortunate enough, with undislocated necks and scathless limbs, to arrive at manhood. Their delight in attaining elevated local positions is unquenched, but they have become conscious of its absurd peculiarity. To avoid the imputation of monomania, they form themselves into a Climbing Institution, and to preclude the idea of its being antagonistic to the Ramoneur Association, they designate it *the Alpine Club*. Of course, the pursuit of science is the professed object of the society, just as the improvement of the breed of horses is of the Jockey Club; but our private impression is, that they do not care for science very much more than they did in their embryo state at Dr Swishsterns, when the only thing they never got to the top of was their mathematical class.

In this most interesting volume* now before us—the first, we hope, of a series which shall describe the various hairbreadth escapes of the one hundred from avalanche and crevasse—not only the driest papers, which could not, perhaps, but be expected, but the baldest and worst written, are the scientific articles; not by any means that their authors are incompetent, for, indeed, they are men of especial eminence, but because, as it seems, they have no time to give to such a work, or feel themselves to be in somewhat too genial company for imparting abstruse information. In truth, the dozen of contributors whose writings make up the volume are almost, without exception, very glorious fellows; in the possession of far better spirits than the hero of Mr Longfellow's *Excelsior*, without being at all less determined than he to reach the highest altitude attainable. If that gentleman did in reality carry a banner instead of an alpenstock, and never cease reiterating at the top of his voice the expression ascribed to him, we do not at all wonder—when we read the following statements—that he made an unsuccessful ascent.

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* *Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers, a Series of Excursions by Members of the Alpine Club.* Longmans.

'I found that I *got on best*,' says Mr Anderson, in his Trip up the Shreckhorn, 'by placing my hand behind me, and crawling down on all fours with my back to the rock; and I used this mode of progression whenever the rock was too steep to admit of my walking upright.'

'Young Zybach,' allows Mr Ball, the Chief Climber, or President of the Alpine Club, 'shewed both skill and courage' on a certain occasion. 'Failing every direct means for reaching the surface of the glacier in safety, he had noticed a smooth piece of ice on which it was possible to alight by a jump from the rock; but this was cut off from the adjoining glacier by impracticable crevasses. His plan was to descend one of these crevasses, and make his way under the glacier until he should find some other crevasse through which it might be possible to ascend again to the light of day. The ice does not touch the rock at every point, but, on the contrary, leaves hollow spaces, through which it is often practicable for a man to crawl. . . . . It is worth remembering by glacier travellers, that in a case of difficulty where they can find no road over the glacier, they may discover, at a pinch, a practicable way under it.' It is also worth remembering by any unfit person who may at any time be tempted to become a *glacier traveller*, that in his case the expression might mean that his body, well preserved and visible (under favourable conditions of the weather) to the curious, from the other side of the ice, for ages, would *progress with the glacier* at its ordinary rate of travelling, and probably reach the low country about the twenty-second century.

This peculiar method of becoming immortal, or rather imperishable, was once attempted, we read, by no less a person than Professor Tyndal, during his scientific wanderings among the *Séracs* of the Glacier du Géant (who, it may be well to inform the unlearned, are not a savage tribe). 'We had walked for some distance along the edge of a high ridge of ice, and had to descend its left face in order to cross a crevasse. The ice was of that loose, granular character which causes it to resemble an aggregate of little polyhedrons jointed together, more than a coherent solid. I was not aware that the substance was so utterly disintegrated as it proved to be. I endeavoured to plant my foot securely on the edge of the crevasse, and to help me to do so, I laid hold of a projecting corner of the ice. It crumbled to pieces in my hand. I tottered for a moment in the effort to regain my balance; my footing gave way, and down I went into the chasm. A wild scream burst from my companion: "O, mon Dieu, il est perdu!" But I escaped unhurt. A ledge, about two feet wide, jutted from the side of the crevasse, and to this I clung, my fall not amounting to more than three or four feet. A block of ice, which partially jammed up the chasm, concealed me from my companion. I called to him, and he responded by another exclamation: "O, mon Dieu, comme j'ai peur!" He helped me up, and, looking anxiously in my face, demanded: "N'avez vous pas peur?"' What the professor replied to that inquiry is not set forth, but we have every reason to believe that it was: 'Not a bit, my good sir!'

The Chief Climber, indeed, actually takes advantage of being within a few inches of Death's door, and *in* a crevasse, to make some interesting observations. 'I was over a great *bergschrund*, completely roofed in with a thick coating of snow; towards the crown of the arch, the roof gave way with me, and though the position is not quite a comfortable one, I had become so far used to it in the course of that day, that I paused for a second to glance down into the vault over which I hung suspended. The chasm appeared to be about thirty feet wide, and went down to a depth that was veiled in the darkness; on either side was a fringe of enormous icicles, forty or fifty feet long, suspended from the cornice of the roof: most striking of all was the exquisite pale-blue light, that alone penetrated the snowy roof, and increased the mysterious character of the unearthly scene.'

The Climbing Club generally, in fact, has not only no fear among these awful Alpine solitudes, but shews something like contempt for those who have. The 'state of extreme excitement from anxiety and terror' of an Englishman found alone upon the Col de St Theodule, makes them quite merry. He had only lost his guide, it appears, who, being 'a few paces in advance, had suddenly disappeared down a chasm in the snow, which had given way under his feet.' However, says the Chief Climber, in extenuation, the poor gentleman was 'probably unused to glacier travelling.' This want of charity for those who are not infected with their own peculiar disease is indeed the only fault we have to find with our authors. One of these pleasant monomaniacs actually begins to moralise upon four unfortunate old gentlemen whom he finds playing at whist after dinner, in Switzerland, instead of doing as he does; 'but every one to his taste,' says he contemptuously (after calling them 'bloated-looking' and 'dissipated'), and proceeds himself upon an expedition which hazards the lives of several fathers of families, who are induced by extravagant bribes to accompany him as guides or porters. The Alpine Club is doubtless a very admirable one, but—the science being about equal in the two establishments—the Zurich Whist Club may be an excellent institution likewise. It is impossible that we should *all* enjoy making *glissades*, or, in other words, sliding down ice-walls at an angle of 60 degrees, with space at the bottom of them. No practical result has ever been derived from that practice, as far as we know, except in one solitary case, which we remember to have read of in a certain tract, where an Alpine traveller starts inadvertently upon a glissade, with latitudinarian opinions, and arrives at the end of it a high-church member of the English establishment.

Even the Climbing Club themselves have designated an *arête* as 'an infinitely narrow ridge of rock, with an everlasting vertical precipice on one side, and one longer and steeper on the other;' and surely, after surmounting many of these, most people would like something better to drink than what they can extract from a quartz pebble—which, it seems, is a great luxury in the mouth of a wanderer among the High Alps. The Halts, which, like the lying down while our own side is 'in' at cricket, seem to us unquestionably the best part of the amusement, are always cut short, either by 'the extreme cold,' or because the day is 'too far advanced' to permit of their enjoying themselves; although it is the month of August, and these unfortunate persons have turned night into day, and are always up and dressed by three o'clock in the morning.

Here is an account of a nice little luncheon and its interruption, which took place in the Trift Pass, under the presidentship of Mr Hinchcliffe, who, to do him justice, is, with the exception of Mr Hardy, the only one of our authors who seems to care about combining any real enjoyment with the climbing business. Upon a certain fine open *plateau*, 'the provision knapsacks were emptied and used as seats; bottles of red wine were stuck upright in the snow; a goodly leg of cold mutton, on its sheet of paper, formed the centre, garnished with hard eggs and bread and cheese, round which we ranged ourselves in a circle. High festival was held under the deep blue heavens, and now and then, as we looked up at the wondrous wall of rock which we had descended, we congratulated ourselves on the victory with a quiet nod indicative of satisfaction. We were just in the full enjoyment of this repast, when a booming sound, like the discharge of a gun far above our heads, made us all at once glance up to the top of the Trifthorn. Close to its craggy summit hung a cloud of dust, like dirty smoke; and in a few seconds, another and a larger one burst forth several hundred feet lower. A glance through the telescope shewed that a fall of rocks had commenced, and the fragments were leaping down from ledge to ledge in a series of cascades. Each block dashed off others at every point of contact, and the uproar became tremendous; thousands of fragments, making every variety of noise, according to their size, and producing the effect of a fire of musketry and artillery combined, thundered downwards from so great a height that we waited anxiously for some considerable time to see them reach the snow-field below. As nearly as we could estimate the distance, we were five hundred yards from the base of the rocks, so we thought that, come what might, we were in a tolerably secure position. At last, we saw many of the blocks plunge into the snow, after taking their last fearful leap; presently, much larger fragments followed, taking proportionally larger bounds; the noise grew fiercer and fiercer, and huge blocks began to fall so near to us, that we jumped to our feet, preparing to dodge them to the best of our ability. "Look out!" cried some one; and we opened out right and left at the approach of a monster, evidently weighing many hundredweights, which was coming right at us, like a huge shell fired from a mortar. It fell with a heavy thud not more than twenty feet from us, scattering lumps of snow into the circle where we had just been dining; but scarcely had we begun to recover from our astonishment, when a still larger rock flew exactly over our heads to a distance of two hundred yards beyond us. . . . We resumed our seats on the knapsacks, now bespattered with snow, and lighted the pipe of tranquillity, all agreeing that we had never before seen such a sight, and wondering at the force which could project such masses for six or seven hundred yards through the air at a single bound. Even Cachat looked somewhat bewildered, and with a most comical expression of face exclaimed: "Ah, si ma femme pouvait savoir où je suis à présent! Je lui ai dit en partant de Chamouni que j'allais voyager avec des messieurs qui étaient les plus tranquilles du monde, et—me voici!"'

These rock-volleys are, it appears, common enough in the High Alps upon the occasion of any very high wind, which also 'drives the snow into little round balls like hail, so that we could scarcely stand upon it;' and as it was, 'one of us,' says Mr Hawkins, 'had to be caught by the hair in the act of slipping over the precipice.' The *couloir* which this gentleman and party had to cross 'was perhaps from fifty to seventy steps across, at an inclination varying from forty to fifty degrees; the whole of this space, together with the adjoining parts of the *arête*, was swept by a shower of fragments of rock of all sizes, which came whizzing and bounding down the slope, not continuously, or we should never have got over, but in volleys, the larger blocks breaking up and scattering in all directions as they fell. These stones are almost the only real danger which it is impossible to guard against; but I never witnessed a similar cannonade to the one we endured on this occasion. The wind and noise were deafening. From time to time, a huge block would come flying, apparently over the top of the *aiguille*, dispersing us for several minutes in utter confusion. It was necessary to cross, however; so our friend the *ancien chasseur*, with great pluck, went first, and cut the steps, taking advantage of lulls in the enemy's fire; and one by one, the rest of us left cover, and got over. The stones could be seen coming round a corner some distance overhead, and, on their appearance, a shout was raised to warn the individual crossing, who, however, could only stand still, for, whilst putting one's feet with precaution into the steps, it was impossible to 'dodge,' there being an equal risk of being hit and of losing one's balance, and so being hurled, in company with the other missiles, over the precipice.'

It is, however, impossible to deny that those who take their perilous pleasure in these altitudes have sounds and sights vouchsafed to them such as we of the valley have no conception of.

'On a sudden,' says the Chief Climber, describing one of his glacier rambles, 'as if from some prodigious distance, there fell upon my ear the sound of musical instruments, pure and clear, but barely distinguishable. I halted and listened. There could be no doubt; there was the beating of a drum, and from time to time, the sound of brass instruments. I asked Mathias, who now came up, what he thought of it, but he had no idea of the cause. Then remembering that persons passing the night at the Grands Mulets have declared that they heard the church-bell, and even the barking of dogs, at Entrêres or Cormayeur, I straight imagined that they were celebrating a festa in some of the valleys on the Piedmontese side of Monte Rosa, from which direction the sounds seemed to come. We moved on, and the sounds continued, becoming rapidly more intense, and soon, as we approached a deep narrow crevasse, the mystery was explained. At a considerable depth below us, a trickling streamlet in the interior of the glacier fell from one ledge of ice to another; the crevasse under our feet played the part of an organ-pipe; and the elastic mass of ice, struck by the descending rill, produced sonorous vibrations. Two interesting conclusions followed from this charming experiment in the laboratory of the glacier: First, that the movement of water in the interior of a glacier is not stopped at night, and hence, that a sharp frost probably does not penetrate very far below the surface; second, that the formation of fissures transversely to the direction of the veined structure, and parallel to the surface of the glacier, is not confined to the lower extremity of a glacier, where such fissures are constantly seen in and about the roof of the cavern whence the glacier torrent flows, but may probably extend in many directions throughout.'

The glory of the glacier by moonlight, 'not sparkling, but beaming forth a calm, ineffable brilliance, high aloft in the ether, far above the dwellings of men,' must indeed be wondrous. Even in the most uncomfortable circumstances of a bivouac—when the slope you rest upon is so steep that you must cling to the wet ground all night if you would save yourself from a thousand feet fall, or must sit upon a stone that has been heated in the embers of the fire, if you would not be frozen to death—there is much, Mr Wills tells us, to be said on the other side.

'It was a night I would not have missed with all its inconveniences. The stars shone bright and clear out of the sky of jet; not a wreath of vapour could be seen; the solemn glacier far beneath us shewed dimly through the gloom with a dead and spectral white, as if it had been some mighty giant lying in his shroud. The crags beyond it were sombre as a funeral pall, and, in the darkness, seemed to rise to such an enormous height, that the eye grew weary of wandering upwards, before their massive ebony was relieved by the liquid and transparent blackness of the sky, with its thousand glittering points of light. Not a sound broke the awful stillness of the scene, except the faint dashing of the distant torrent, which we had sought so unsuccessfully, and the crackling of the fire, as R—— heaped upon it fresh armfuls of bilberries and rhododendrons. Occasionally, by the fitful glare of the flames, I could see his form moving slowly and noiselessly about, now in bold relief against the ruddy light, now half hidden by the curling smoke, now illuminated by the blaze, as he passed round to the other side in search of fuel, quite unconscious of how much he was adding to the picturesqueness of the scene. I could not help thinking of home, and of those who not improbably were at that very moment thinking of me, little dreaming that I was lying out on the side of a glacier, many a thousand feet above the sea, with nothing between me and the blue vault of heaven. . . . . That pale gray tint which steals over the eastern sky so imperceptibly that you hardly know it is there, save for the sicklier glitter of the stars, how long before the dawn it shews itself! How slowly does it ripen into light! How it seems to intensify the power of frost, and to give a sharper edge to the keenness of the wind! It was the most protracted daybreak that I ever remember. . . . . At last the gray faded into white, the white deepened into yellow, the yellow kindled into a faint, red blush, and the highest peaks of the Aiguilles Dorées were once more tipped with the welcome light of day.'

Such scenes as these are plentiful throughout the volume, and form one of its principal charms; but, besides the perils and the beauties, there are some really humorous descriptions also.

Mr Hardy, whose spirits are inexhaustible, and whose papers particularly graphic and vivacious, ascended the cairn of stones which the only two human beings who had preceded them had piled upon the summit of the Finster-Aarhorn, and, hat in hand, led the volley of cheers. 'We all,' says he, 'detached sundry fragments of rock to carry away with us. It is currently reported that each man says he has got *the* top. I am sorry to disappoint the other four aspirants, but I can assure them that I have it myself.'

The account given by Mr Kennedy of his own and this gentleman's Night Adventure on the Bristenstock, is perhaps as spirited a sketch as any in the volume. They *would* go up this mountain, which was new to them both, without a guide; they *would* delay upon its grassy slopes, and forget their stern profession in the dreamy music of the distant church-bells below; also, when they did get up to the top, very late in the afternoon, they *would* try a new way down which ended nowhere. They had to clamber this way back again, when it was getting dark; and 'the climb was so stiff, that I stood at times on a narrow ledge, with my fingers in clefts of the rock, and with my breast pressed against its face, lest I should fall backward, while Hardy climbed up and stood upon my shoulders, so as just to reach some projecting fragment; and, after drawing himself up, would lie down, and, stretching out his hand to me, help me to place myself alongside of him.' About five hundred feet from the summit, light altogether failed them, as far as progress was concerned; they 'selected a ledge running north and south, probably the only available locality on this face of the mountain, about four feet and a half wide, and eight long, bounded on the east by the rock, which rose perpendicularly, and terminating on the western side by the cliffs which fell from it precipitously towards the valley. On this exposed side, we built a wall about eighteen inches high, as a guard against a roll over in the night, and also as some protection from the wind. We levelled our bed to the best of our ability with nice and smooth stones, selecting some particularly fine specimens for our pillows. . . . . Hardy produced the lump of bread which he had fortunately saved; a portion of it was reserved for breakfast on the morrow, the remainder we shared for supper; and we eagerly drank from a streamlet that trickled close at hand. Our frugal meal was soon despatched; but the preparations necessary for completing our bed had occupied some time, and it was now dark, so we agreed to turn in for the night.

'We were obliged to use the greatest care in this operation. First one made himself comfortable; the other cautiously placed himself alongside, and endeavoured to do likewise. Although we agreed that, in order to avoid the risk of falling over, we would not both sleep with our back to the precipice, yet ever and anon as we leaned a little against our fragile wall of stones, one or two of them would become displaced, and go bounding away into the valley some thousands of feet below. Thus we reposed, locked in each other's arms, like the Babes in the Wood, whom the robins covered with leaves; only, in the present case, there were no babes, and no wood, and no robins, and no leaves. For a long time, we were sleepless, and yet not inclined to talk; the stars were shining brilliantly in the black vault above, and never, I think, in all our rambles, did grandeur and sublimity make themselves so impressively felt. We were fully aware of the difficulty of our position, and of the imperative necessity for coolness and self-possession, should fog or bad weather come on. Not for one moment, however, did either of us, I believe, feel doubtful; and it was probably this self-reliance, this hardly acknowledged fact, that our energies would be taxed to the utmost, and that our nerves must be fully strung to meet and overcome every obstacle, that added so greatly to the unusually deep solemnity of that hour. Perhaps neither of us had ever before felt so immediately under the protection of a Higher Power as we did on that night. We were alone upon the mountain, far away from the haunts of men, and it seemed as if we two, with the eyes of Heaven looking down upon us, must have been in some especial way under the care of Providence. It may well be that both of us then realised, more than ever before, that genuine trust in an Omnipotent Power, which, while confiding the ultimate results to Him, yet leads its possessor to the distinct recognition of the necessity of bringing into play his own activity, his own energy, and even his own self-reliance. Strange, too, as it may appear to many, notwithstanding all the discomforts of our couch, we yet, throughout that night, experienced a certain sensation of enjoyment and satisfaction. At frequent intervals we rose by mutual consent, stamped our feet upon our stony bed, for we did not dare to move six inches in any direction, and beat our arms after the fashion of London cabmen in cold weather. At one period of the night, when we both felt more than usually cold, I remember that Hardy quietly related to me how, prior to his departure from England, certain advice had been given him by a most valued member of his family. It appears that on one or two occasions he had suffered rather severely from rheumatic fever, and his respected relative had therefore rightly cautioned him to avoid carefully all exposure to night-air, and every risk calculated to encourage another attack. "What," said Hardy to me, "would the dear old lady think if she could see me now?"'

The pair eventually did come down into the world again, but they could not easily get the world to believe it. An elderly gentleman more impressed with the dangers than the beauties of Switzerland, added force to his arguments at a *table d'hôte* at which Hardy was present, about a week afterwards, by instancing the melancholy fate of two young men who had lately perished miserably upon the Bristenstock. 'In fact,' said he, 'according to my informant, nothing was found of their mangled corpses except some small particles of blood-stained clothing.'

'That,' quoth Hardy, 'I can well understand, for I am one of those unfortunates; and I remember that, in many parts of the climb, I was obliged to sit down and allow myself to slide over the rocks, so that I afterwards found myself minus a portion of my nether integument; and these, no doubt, are the patches of raiment, the discovery of which you relate.'

In conclusion, we may say, that this volume—with good maps and coloured illustrations—will afford most pleasant reading to anybody. In spite of what we have said against the sanity of the Climbing Club, they afford a very striking example of the pre-eminence of our own countrymen over all others in matters requiring determination, intrepidity, and skill. We doubt whether any other nation but our own will ever boast of such an association; or, if it do, that it will be able to publish such unexaggerated personal records as those we have here described.

THE WILL OF PETER THE GREAT.[*]

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.[†]

In the name of the Most Holy and Indivisible Trinity, we, Peter the First, Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, &c., to all our descendants and successors to the throne and government of the Russian nation:

God, from whom we derive our existence, and to whom we owe our crown, having constantly enlightened us by His Spirit, and sustained us by His divine help, allows me to look on the Russian people as called upon hereafter to *hold sway over Europe!* My reason for thus thinking is, that the European nations have mostly reached a state of old age, bordering on imbecility, or they are rapidly approaching it: naturally, then, they will be *easily* and *indubitably* conquered by a people strong in youth and vigour, especially when this latter shall have attained its full strength and power. I look on the future invasion of the eastern and western countries by the north, as a periodical movement, ordained by Providence, who in like manner *regenerated* the Roman nation by barbarian invasions. These emigrations of men from the north are as the reflux of the Nile, which, at certain periods, comes to fertilise the impoverished lands of Egypt by its deposit. I found Russia as a *rivulet*, I leave it a *river:* my successors will make of it a *large sea*, destined to fertilise the impoverished lands of Europe; and its waters will overflow, in spite of opposing dams, erected by weak hands, if our descendants only know how to direct its course. This is the reason I leave them the following instructions. I give these countries to their watchfulness and care, as Moses gave the Tables of the Law to the Jewish people.

I. Keep the Russian nation in a STATE OF CONTINUAL WAR, so as to have the soldier always under arms, and ready for action, excepting when the finances of the state will not allow of it. Keep up the forces; choose the best moment for attack. By these means you will be ready for war even in the time of peace. This is for the interest of the future aggrandisement of Russia.

II. Endeavour, by every possible means, to bring in, from the neighbouring civilised countries of Europe, officers in times of war, and learned men in times of peace, thus giving the Russian people the advantages enjoyed by other countries, without allowing them to lose any of their own self-respect.

III. On every occasion take[*] a part in the affairs and quarrels of Europe; above all, in those of Germany, which country being the nearest, more immediately concerns us.

IV. *Divide* Poland, by exciting civil discord there; win over the nobility by bribery; *corrupt the diets*, so as to have influence in the election of kings; get partisans into office—protect them;[†] bring to sojourn there the Muscovite troops, until such time as they can be permanently established there. If the neighbouring powers start difficulties, appease them, for a time, by parcelling out the country, *until you can retake in detail all that has been ceded.*

V. *Take as much as you can from Sweden;* and cause yourselves to be attacked by her, *so as to have a pretext for subduing her.* To accomplish this, sever Denmark from Sweden, and Sweden from Denmark, carefully keeping up their rivalries.

VI. *Always choose* as wives for the Russian princes, German princesses, so as to increase family alliances, to draw mutual interests closer, and by *propagating our principles in Germany*, to enlist her in our cause.

VII. England requiring us for her navy, and she being the only power that can aid in the development of ours, seek a commercial alliance with her, in preference to any other. Exchange our wood and the productions of our land for her gold, and establish between her merchants, her sailors, and ours, a continual intercourse: this will aid in perfecting the Russian fleet for navigation and commerce.

VIII. *Extend* your possessions towards the north, along the Baltic; and *towards the south, by the Black Sea.*

IX. *Approach as near as possible to Constantinople and its outskirts.* HE WHO SHALL REIGN THERE WILL BE THE TRUE SOVEREIGN OF THE WORLD. Consequently, be continually at war—sometimes with the Turks, sometimes with Persia. Establish dockyards on the Black Sea; get entire possession of it by degrees, also of the Baltic Sea; *this being necessary to the accomplishment of the plan.* Hasten the decline of Persia; penetrate to the Persian Gulf; re-establish, if possible, the ancient commerce of the Levant through Syria, and *make your way to the Indies*—they are the emporium of the world. Once there, you can do without the gold of England.

X. Seek, and carefully keep up an alliance with Austria; acquiesce, apparently, in her ideas of dominating over Germany; at the same time, clandestinely exciting against her the jealousy of the neighbouring provinces. Endeavour that the aid of Russia should be called for by one and the other, so that, by exercising a kind of guardianship over the country, you prepare a way for governing hereafter.

XI. Give the House of Austria an interest for joining in banishing the Turks from Europe; defraud her of her share of the booty, at the conquest of Constantinople, either by raising a war for her with the ancient states of Europe, or by giving her a portion which you will *take back at a future period.*

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[*] Deposited in the archives of the palace of Peterhof, near St Petersburg.

[†] This authentic document (the supreme foundation and law of Russian politics since the time of Peter I.) was confidentially deposited in the hands of the Abbé de Bernis, Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1757; and also in those of Louis XV. See the *Memoirs of the Chevalier d'Eon*, t. 1. p. 170. A copy is also to be found in the diplomatic archives of the French empire, and a transcript of this appears in the volume, *Politiques de la Russie en Orient—par Victor Morpugo*, from which our translation is taken.

[*] 'To *steal* and to *lie*,' said Bulharyn, one of the best Russian writers, 'are the two auxiliary verbs of our language.' Certainly Peter I. has made good use of them in his will, adding now and then the verbs, to *extend*, to *advance*, to *divide*, to *share*, to *dominate*, to *subdue*, to *corrupt*, &c.

[†] Stanislaus Poniatowski, lover of Catharine II., and last king of Poland, was elected by the influence of the Princes Augustus and Michael Czartoryski, his parents being declared partisans of Russia.

XII. Attach to yourselves, and assemble around you, all the united Greeks, as also the disunited or schismatics, which are scattered either in Hungary, Turkey, or the south of Poland. Make yourselves their centres, their chief support, and lay the foundation for universal supremacy by establishing a kind of royalty or sacerdotal government; the Slavonic Greeks will be so many friends that you will have scattered amongst your enemies.

XIII. Sweden severed, Persia and Turkey conquered, Poland subjugated, our armies reunited, the Black and the Baltic Seas guarded by our vessels, you must make propositions separately and discreetly—first to the court of Versailles, then to that of Vienna, to share with them the empire of the universe.

If one of them accept—and it cannot be otherwise, so as you flatter their pride and ambition—make use of it to crush the other; then crush, in its turn, the surviving one, by engaging with it in a death-struggle, the issue of which cannot be doubtful, Russia possessing already all the east and a great part of Europe!

XIV. If—which is not likely—both refuse the *propositions of Russia*, you must manage to raise quarrels for them, and make them exhaust one another; then, profiting by a decisive moment, Russia will bring down her assembled troops on Germany; at the same time, two considerable fleets will set out—the one from the Sea of Azov, the other from the port of Archangel—loaded with Asiatic hordes, under the convoy of the armed fleets from the Black Sea and the Baltic. Advancing by the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean, they will invade France on one side, whilst Germany will already have been invaded on the other. These countries conquered, the rest of Europe will easily pass under the yoke, without striking a single blow.

XV. Thus Europe can and ought to be subdued.

PETER I.,
AUTOCRAT OF ALL THE RUSSIAS.

HEARING THROUGH THE OPEN MOUTH.

A correspondent of the *Notes and Queries* states that a deaf friend of his found he could hear with tolerable distinctness when he placed the rim of his hat in his mouth. The correspondent has tried the experiment with other deaf friends, and generally with success. It may be questioned if the rim of the hat has anything to do with the case. The mere opening of the mouth, by allowing the sound to pass in by the Eustachian tube, may be what enabled these persons to hear. It is for the sake of this help to hearing, that, when we are very intent in listening, we instinctively open our mouths.

THE WORN WEDDING-RING.

YOUR wedding-ring wears thin, dear wife; ah, summers not a few,
Since I put it on your finger first, have passed o'er me and you;
And, love, what changes we have seen—what cares and pleasures too—
Since you became my own dear wife, when this old ring was new.

O blessings on that happy day, the happiest of my life,
When, thanks to God, your low sweet 'Yes' made you my loving wife;
Your heart will say the same, I know; that day's as dear to you,
That day that made me yours, dear wife, when this old ring was new.

How well do I remember now, your young sweet face that day:
How fair you were—how dear you were—my tongue could hardly say;
Nor how I doted on you; ah, how proud I was of you;
But did I love you more than now, when this old ring was new!

No—no; no fairer were you then than at this hour to me,
And dear as life to me this day, how could you dearer be?
As sweet your face might be that day as now it is, 'tis true,
But did I know your heart as well when this old ring was new?

O partner of my gladness, wife, what care, what grief is there,
For me you would not bravely face—with me you would not share?
O what a weary want had every day, if wanting you,
Wanting the love that God made mine when this old ring was new.

Years bring fresh links to bind us, wife—small voices that are here,
Small faces round our fire that make their mother's yet more dear,
Small, loving hearts, your care each day makes yet more like to you,
More like the loving heart made mine when this old ring was new.

And, blessed be God, all He has given are with us yet; around
Our table, every little life lent to us, still is found;
Though cares we've known, with hopeful hearts the worst we've struggled through;
Blessed be His name for all His love since this old ring was new.

The past is dear; its sweetness still our memories treasure yet;
The griefs we've borne, together borne, we would not now forget;
Whatever, wife, the future brings, heart unto heart still true,
We'll share as we have shared all else since this old ring was new.

And if God spare us 'mongst our sons and daughters to grow old,
We know His goodness will not let your heart or mine grow cold;
Your aged eyes will see in mine all they've still shewn to you,
And mine in yours all they have seen since this old ring was new.

And oh, when death shall come at last to bid me to my rest,
May I die looking in those eyes, and resting on that breast;
O may my parting gaze be blessed with the dear sight of you,
Of those fond eyes—fond as they were when this old ring was new.

W. C. B.

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'GOD DEFEND THE RIGHT.'

SUCH was the sentiment under which men long ago professed to try their private cause in battle. In all public war there is a like underlying idea, that it is a kind of arbitration placed in the hands of the divine ruler of the world. Two states, or whatever be the parties at issue, each feeling right in its own intention, or sense of justice, such as it is, is willing to raise the cry, 'God defend the right,' however unwilling in its obstinacy or opinionativeness afterwards to acknowledge an adverse decision as a divine award that it was in the wrong. Did men see better where the right lies, they would less need to ask God to decide on their claims. Unfortunately, self-love, erroneous maxims, hardened habits, and a hundred other things, confound their sense of the real right, and the stern arbitrament therefore becomes inevitable, whatever peace-advocates may say to the contrary.

Such being the case, it becomes of importance to learn whether the award usually accords with what an impartial power would be disposed to consider the right, or otherwise.

We think that European history during late centuries—to go no further—clearly shews that there is a tendency of events in favour of the right—accepting as such what is wisest, justest, and most conducive to the general interests of humanity. And if men would study the nature of what has been thus in a manner pronounced for, they might come to trim their conduct in future cases, as proposing litigants do by a study of decisions, and thus save a great deal of the bloody arbitrament in future.

For example, in the great civil war of our own country, there was a decisive pronouncement in favour of the opponents of the king. Charles was wedded to antiquated ideas, was imperious, insincere, altogether insufferable—and he was punished by the total failure of his cause. But his opponents were in their turn fanatical and sanguinary, and carrying matters to an opposite extreme, were punished by a period of reaction, which threw them below the feet of royalty. James II., offending anew like his father, met the gentler punishment of the loss of his throne. Some see, in such events, a divine interference for protestantism and progressive politics; but it is not necessary to go upon that difficult line. It is enough that God has so made the human heart, and so arranged for the interests of his creatures, that what is narrow, exclusive, tyrannical, offensive to the religious feelings of a majority, opposed to general human interests, is difficult to support, and most likely, in a struggle, to go to the wall.

When the French people, rising in indignation from a long course of oppression, attempted to rectify their government, and were set upon by a troop of arbitrary monarchs, who felt rebuked and endangered by what was taking place, they had what most of us now believe to have been the right on their side, and the result was that four years saw them—not partitioned, or suppressed, as was expected—but victorious in numberless battles, and in possession of Holland, the Rhine, and Italy. Britain, which had been led by a stupid terror to attack them, was punished with a long and expensive war. But France became in her turn, through an insane love of conquest, an offender, and her punishment in due time arrived in foreign occupation and the re-imposition of a hateful dynasty. A common mind sees in this change only the fickleness of Fortune; but it is, in reality, in each case alike, a divine justice which shapes the issue. The feelings and rights of nations cannot be outraged without there arising a tendency to get them vindicated and protected. The patriotic outbreak of Germany in 1813 was as righteous as the vigour of the belligerent French republicans was in 1792, and it was equally approved by that divine voice which sounds in the Event.

In the history of the commotions of 1848, it might be thought by some that 'right to the wrong did yield.' But let it be observed, it is not abstract right alone which makes a case. Judgment, wisdom, the *practical character* of an affair, go a great way in determining events. The movement party were fanatics in their way, and men quickly began to feel that, to all appearance, the old governments were a lesser evil. In France, it was thought better to have a downright despotism. What justice dealt with in this instance was the folly of thinking that an improved state-system, antagonistic to that formerly existing, can be made up in a day out of totally new elements. The less fatal error of ruling by coercion was what the divine voice for the time sanctioned.

We have since then seen a monarch who had been spoiled by the circumstances in which he lived, venturing on a rash and wicked act, which he thought no one would dare to challenge. He miscalculated. Two great states declared war against him. Too proud to admit his error, he determined to sustain the shock. A year saw that proud and mighty man worn out with anxiety and toil, and only escaping by death from the humiliation which was in store for him and his Russias.

Modern Austria is a fanatic for order, as contra-distinguished from all progression and all concern of the people in their government. Considering what anarchy has sometimes done, she is not wholly without a plea in law; but the position is too extreme to be supported in these times. In working out her case, moreover, Austria has oppressed her dependencies, and acted as a tyrant over some of her neighbours. She has occasioned disturbance by her very love of order, and created danger by her excessive ardour for perfect security. In her system of procedure she has trusted wholly in military power to preserve for herself what cannot be rightly retained without the concurrence and good-will of men. She has disgusted more than her own subjects by calling in the aid of the papal power. It would have been all very well, perhaps, some centuries ago; but it does not suit our epoch. One might pretty safely say beforehand, that the stupidity of such a course would bring punishment, even if the horrible tyranny had nothing to do with the matter.

The events of May and June of the present year have given an award against a system so mistimed and so misplaced. Europe has seen with astonishment the largest and most carefully constructed military system in the world utterly fail before the Franco-Sardinian army. Austria had great material, great bravery, and, after all, a principle to fight for in her love of *l'ordre établi.* But she was where she had no true right to be. She was among a people who only could be kept under her rule by terror. She was falsifying her own purposes by the way in which she had to carry them out. All the moral force in the case was accordingly against her. She fought, not like an honest litigant, but like a criminal standing at bay. The sentiments of men seemed to form a very shower of arrows against her. Now, what was all this but the divine constitution of the world pronouncing that the wrong cannot be kept up for ever, that the right must sooner or later have the ascendency? God allows the tyrant and the fool a most liberal latitude wherein to play their parts; but when they have fairly exhausted a long-suffering mercy, the crushing declaration is trumpeted forth at last, that the day of vengeance has come.

History has been disrespectfully spoken of in our time as an old almanac; but, if men would read her pages with a true intelligence, they might extract from them many good lessons. Just as common observation pronounces that, in private life, honesty, industry, and a just economy are usually followed by some share of the world's wealth and comfort, so does history tell us that sound and just political action usually prospers. The statesman and the state-system which cultivate only self-will and selfishness, which prove insensible to the demands of the times, which seek by cruelty to defend iniquity, appear in history just as sure of punishment as we all know common roguery to be. Prejudice and all kinds of shallownesses forbid us sometimes to see that it is so; but the power of reading the great record aright is constantly improving, and even now nations are taking her warnings. For example, in the event of a great dependency expressing discontents like those of the Anglo-American colonists of 1775, we should not now act as did the government of George III. in that unfortunate year. Warned by the fatal consequences which attended our interference with France in 1793, we now allow her to make what changes in her government she pleases, and receive every new one with like respect, thus preserving her friendship, and keeping at peace, instead of incurring the evils of endless and exhausting contests. It does appear as if a reference to *former decisions* would ere long save mankind from many disputes which nothing but a sanguinary suit could formerly have settled.

SOMETHING LIKE A CONJUROR.

ALTHOUGH we are accustomed to speak of an unwise man as being 'no conjuror,' it is certain that we do not hold the art of Prestidigitation very highly. Notwithstanding that that calling boasts of its *Professors*—if not of its Professorships—it has not hitherto been reckoned by us among the respectable walks of life; nor would Paterfamilias be satisfied with a son who chose it, even though Fortune had blessed the lad with sharpest eyes and swiftest fingers, and Sleight-of-hand had marked him for her own. M. Robert, the skilful watchmaker of Blois, was quite of his opinion in this matter, and opposed his own youthful offspring's views in this unorthodox direction with affectionate firmness. At eight years old, this lad, brought up in a home which might almost be called artistic, was quite an accomplished mechanician. In his play-hours, while at school, he constructed a charming open cage, in which was fixed miniature gymnastic machinery, kept in motion by the little prisoners whom he had previously captured in the mouse-traps of his devising. They raised the water for their own drinking by means of a pump which he had made almost entirely of quills. Engineering was indeed a passion with him always, although he gave it up—except occasionally—when he devoted himself to the more serious pursuits of Conjuring and Prestidigitation. His life-long devotion to the latter sciences he attributed to the simple incident of a bookseller having sent him two volumes of *Scientific Amusements*, instead of Berthard's *Treatise on Clockmaking*. 'How often,' says he, 'have I since blessed this providential error, without which I should have probably vegetated as a country watchmaker! My life would have been spent in gentle monotony; I should have been spared many emotions, sufferings, and shocks; but, on the other hand, what lively sensations, what profound delight would have been sacrificed!' So that it would seem—since this reflection is made in comparative old age, after the acquisition of a great reputation and more than a competency—that Paterfamilias was wrong in this particular case; as indeed he generally is when he has to do with the genius, the Exceptional Boy, such as, without doubt, young Robert was.

In less than one month, by aid of this accidental volume, and the practical instruction of a certain corn-cutter, who had a talent for legerdemain, he could juggle with no less than four balls at once; nay, could place a book before him, and read it without any hesitation while the balls were in the air.

But let it not be imagined that the top of any profession, however *outré*, is to be attained by mere natural aptitude, without application and diligence. 'When you have read my volume,'* says Robert Houdin, 'you will know how a magician is produced, and will learn that the tree whence my magic staff was cut was only that of persevering labour, often bedewed by the sweat of my brow.'

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that this most successful Prestidigitateur of perhaps any age—no charlatan, such as Cagliostro and his followers, but an open and unpretending professor of the Art of Deception—did meet with great opportunities in his early life. Having fallen from a diligence, he is picked up half-dead on the roadside, by a celebrated conjuror, called Torriano, who adopts him and teaches him his trade. The history of this man is wonderful, even to melodrama, and tempts us much by its singularity; but we have quotations enough to make from the experience of our own magician. We will merely state that Torriano has the misfortune to shoot his only son dead upon his own stage, while they were performing the 'apple-scene' in *William Tell*.

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* *Memoirs of Robert Houdin, Ambassador, Author, and Conjuror.* Written by Himself. Chapman and Hall.

M. Robert, while still young, married Mademoiselle Houdin, whose name, affixed to his own, has become so familiar to us; and by the advice of her father, who was also a mechanician, set about studying the science of automata-making, as subservient to his intended calling of a juggler. Among other ingenious pieces of mechanism which he makes a point of examining, he sees the famous Automaton Chess-player, which in its time had beaten half the sovereigns of Europe. It now appears that at the bottom of this mystery there was concealed a living man—one of very extraordinary history. Worousky was a Russian officer who had headed a revolt, and only escaped from the scene of its suppression with a pair of broken thighs. Cured with the loss of both limbs by a kind-hearted Dr Osloff, he fell under the notice of a friend of that person, a M. de Kempelin, a Viennese mechanician, who contrived what would at once obtain Worousky's escape out of the country, save Osloff from the consequences of his humane interference, and furnish a future means of living for the former. He constructed a piece of mechanism, in which Worousky's extraordinary talents for chess-playing should be taken advantage of. 'The automaton represented a Turk of the natural size, wearing the national costume, and seated behind a box of the shape of a chest of drawers. In the middle of the top of the box was a chess-board. Prior to commencing the game, the artist opened several doors in the chest, and M. Osloff could see inside a large number of wheels, pulleys, cylinders, springs, &c., occupying the larger part. At the same time, he opened a long drawer, from which he produced the chessmen, and a cushion, on which the Turk was to rest his arm. This examination ended, the robe of the automaton was raised, and the interior of the body could also be inspected. The doors being then closed, M. de Kempelen wound up one of the wheels with a key he inserted in a hole in the chest; after which the Turk, with a gentle nod of salutation, placed his hand on one of the pieces, raised it, deposited it on another square, and laid his arm on the cushion before him. The inventor had stated that, as the automaton could not speak, it would signify check to the king by three nods, and to the queen by two.

'The doctor moved in his turn, and waited patiently till his adversary, whose movements had all the dignity of the sultan he represented, had moved. The game, though slow at first, soon grew animated, and the doctor found he had to deal with a tremendous opponent; for, in spite of all his efforts to defeat the figure, his game was growing quite desperate. It is true, though, that for some minutes past the doctor's attention had appeared to be distracted, and one idea seemed to occupy him. But while hesitating whether he should impart his thoughts to his friend, the figure gave three nods. The game was over.

"By Jove!" the loser said, with a tinge of vexation, which the sight of the inventor's smiling face soon dispelled, "if I were not certain Worousky is at this moment in bed, I should believe I had been playing with him. His head alone is capable of inventing such a check-mate. And, besides," the doctor said, looking fixedly at M. de Kempelen, "can you tell me why your automaton plays with the left hand, just like Worousky?"'

This peculiarity has always been attributed to the carelessness of the constructer, and M. Osloff was of the same opinion, until Kempelen raised the robe of the Turk, and displayed the poor cripple stowed away in its body, having crept thither after the inspection of the automaton by the spectator, and while the box and machinery were being examined. The three friends were the more delighted as the instrument promised to furnish Worousky with a mode of escape out of the Russian dominions, as well as to assure him a livelihood. That very evening, their plans were arranged; and in order to arouse no suspicion, performances were to be given in all the towns through which they passed. These exhibitions were only too successful, and the Empress Catharine, excited by the wonderful report of them, insisted upon having the automaton at the palace. The unfortunate rebel, upon whose head she had set so many rubles, was obliged to obey, although it took himself and caravan no less than fifteen days to travel from Vitebsk to St Petersburg; and the match with the empress herself came off before the court.

'The skilful Mussulman captured a bishop and a knight, and the game was turning much to the disadvantage of the lady, when the Turk, suddenly forgetting his dignified gravity, gave a violent blow on his cushion, and pushed back a piece his adversary had just moved. Catharine II. had attempted to cheat; perhaps to try the skill of the automaton, or for some other reason. At any rate, the haughty empress, unwilling to confess her weakness, replaced the piece on the same square, and regarded the automaton with an air of imperious authority. The result was most unexpected—the Turk upset all the pieces with a blow of his hand, and immediately the clock-work, which had been heard during the whole game, stopped. It seemed as if the machinery had got out of repair. Pale and trembling, M. de Kempelen, recognising in this Worousky's impetuous temper, awaited the issue of this conflict between the insurgent and his sovereign.

"Ah, ah, my good automaton, your manners are rather rough," the empress said, good-humouredly, not sorry to see a game she had small chance of winning end thus. "Oh, you are a famous player, I grant; but you were afraid of losing the game, and so prudently upset the pieces. Well, I am now quite convinced of your skill and your violent character."'

And thus poor Worousky, who had lost so many limbs, managed at last to preserve his head.

The escape of our own hero, Robert Houdin, from poverty and ruin was scarcely less remarkable. Although he had produced the 'alarum-light'—which woke you and lit a candle simultaneously—and other popular and useful mechanical contrivances, he straightway invested all his earnings in theatrical automata, which gave him no immediate return, and so he grew poorer and poorer daily. At last he had a sum of 2000 francs to pay at the month's end, and not a penny to meet it. At this crisis, he found a M. C——, a rich curiosity-dealer, to buy from him, for the sum of 5000 francs, 'a writing and drawing automaton,' which was as yet only a conception in M. Houdin's brain. Upon this the mechanician took a determination which, in the case of any but a poor conjuror, would be well-nigh called heroic.

'Paris not appearing to me a secure place against annoyance, I chose the suburbs as my retreat; and one fine day, despite the prayers and supplications of my whole family, after intrusting my business to one of my workmen, whose talent and probity I was convinced of, I proceeded to Belleville, and installed myself in a little room in the Rue des Bois, which I hired for twelve months at a hundred francs. The only furniture was a bed, a chest of drawers, a table, and a few chairs. This act of my madness, as my friends called it, or this heroic determination, as I called it, saved me from imminent ruin, and was my first step on the ladder of success. From this moment, an obstinate will was aroused in me, which enabled me to confront many obstacles and difficulties.

'I am bound to confess that the first days of my retirement were painful, and I bitterly deplored the harsh necessity that thus isolated me from all I loved. The society of my wife and children had grown a necessity to me; a kiss from these dear beings restored my courage in hours of despondency, and now I was deprived of it. Surely I must have been supported by an enormous strength of will not to turn back at the prospect of this frightful vacuum. Many times I furtively wiped away a tear, but then I closed my eyes, and straightway my automaton and the various combinations that were to animate it appeared before me like a consoling vision; I passed in review all the wheels I had created; I smiled upon them like so many children of my own; and when I emerged from this restorative dream, I set to work again, filled with a courageous resignation. . . . . I had been now living more than a year at Belleville, and I saw with extreme pleasure the end of my task and of my exile drawing near. After many doubts as to the success of my enterprise, the solemn moment arrived when I should make the first trial of my writer. I had spent the whole day in giving the last touches to my automaton, which sat before me as if awaiting my orders, and prepared to answer the questions I asked it. I had only to press the spring in order to enjoy the long awaited result. My heart beat violently, and though I was alone, I trembled with emotion at the mere thought of this imposing trial. I had just laid the first sheet of paper before my writer, and asked him this question, "Who is the author of your being?"

'I pressed the spring, and the clock-work began acting. I dared hardly breathe, through fear of disturbing the operations. The automaton bowed to me, and I could not refrain from smiling on it as on my son; but when I saw the eyes fix an attentive glance on the paper—when the arm a few seconds numb and lifeless, began to move and trace my signature in a firm handwriting—the tears started to my eyes, and I fervently thanked Heaven for granting me such success. And it was not alone the satisfaction I experienced as inventor, but the certainty I had of being able to restore some degree of comfort to my family, that caused my deep feeling of gratitude. After making my Sosia repeat my signature a thousand times, I gave it this next question: "What o'clock is it?" The automaton, acting in obedience to a clock, wrote: "It is two in the morning." This was a very timely warning: I profited by it, and went straight to bed. Against my expectations, I enjoyed a sleep I had not known for a long time.'

We now come to the description of that part of M. Robert Houdin's life with which most of us are more or less acquainted. The wonderful exhibition which he was wont to call 'second-sight,' played off by himself and his son, was effected, it seems, in the following fashion. A secret and unnoticeable correspondence existed between the two, so that the father could announce to the well-blinded boy the name, nature, and bulk of any object handed to him by the spectators; nay, it may be almost said of *all* objects, since, aided by excellent memories, the pair had managed to classify in their heads every article which could possibly be offered to them. This was absolutely necessary, for before going to witness the last's performance, a council was often held at the spectator's homes, where some object to embarrass the conjuror was decided upon. Among these were half-effaced antique medals, minerals, books printed in languages and characters of every description, coats of arms, microscopic objects, &c. They learned, therefore, how to describe all these; they got up the names of every surgical instrument; they learned every foreign alphabet of dead and living tongues; they studied antiquities and curiosities. Moreover, they could both detect, at one glance, almost every article of furniture or ornament in any apartment, an art which lessened many of their difficulties, and which they thus acquired.

'In order to make my young assistant understand the nature of the exercise we were going to learn, I took a domino, the cinq-quater for instance, and laid it before him. Instead of letting him count the points of the two numbers, I requested the boy to tell me the total at once. "Nine," he said. Then I added another domino, the quater-tray. "That makes sixteen," he said, without any hesitation. I stopped the first lesson here. The next day we succeeded in counting at a single glance four dominoes; the day after, six; and thus we were at length enabled to give instantaneously the product of a dozen dominoes. This result obtained, we applied ourselves to a far more difficult task, over which we spent a month. My son and I passed rapidly before a toy-shop, or any other displaying a variety of wares, and cast an attentive glance upon it. A few steps further on, we drew paper and pencil from our pockets, and tried which could describe the greater number of objects seen in passing. I must own that my son reached a perfection far greater than mine, for he could often write down forty objects, while I could scarcely reach thirty. Often feeling vexed at this defeat, I would return to the shop and verify his statement, but he rarely made a mistake.'

Upon his interviews with monarchs, and intimacies with the mighty of the earth, it is not our purpose to dwell; since, although they have doubtless an interest of their own, they belong rather to the advertisement side of our author's sheets, and interrupt that most useful and undesigned moral which they convey. It would perhaps have been impossible in this country for a peripatetic conjuror, however able, to have been employed quasi-politically, as was M. Robert Houdin by the French government; but we cannot but think that his diplomacy was at least equal in merit, as it was decidedly superior in success, to that which our own professionals have been recently exhibiting in that line. It was necessary that the pernicious influence of the marabouts—the false prophets and pretended sorcerers of Algiers—should be destroyed, and their tricks exposed to the Arabs; and after repeated invitations, M. Houdin accepted, in 1851, that delicate mission.

After having very exceedingly 'astonished the natives' throughout his first performance, which the chiefs had received 'commands' from the government to attend, he determined to close it with a really 'startling effect.'

'For my last trick, I required the assistance of an Arab. At the request of several interpreters, a young Moor, about twenty years of age, tall, well-built, and richly dressed, consented to come on the stage. Bolder and more civilised, doubtlessly, than his comrades of the plains, he walked firmly up to me. I drew him towards the table that was in the centre of the stage, and pointed out to him and to the other spectators that it was slightly built and perfectly isolated; after which, without further preface, I told him to mount upon it, and covered him with an enormous cloth-cone, open at the top. Then, drawing the cone and its contents on to a plank, the ends of which were held by my servant and myself, we walked to the footlights with our heavy burden, and upset it. The Moor had disappeared—the cone was perfectly empty! Immediately there began a spectacle which I shall never forget. The Arabs were so affected by this last trick, that, impelled by an irresistible feeling of terror, they rose in all parts of the house, and yielded to the influence of a general panic. To tell the truth, the crowd of fugitives was densest at the door of the dress-circle, and it could be seen, from the agility and confusion of these high dignitaries, that they were the first to wish to leave the house. Vainly did one of them, the caïd of the Beni-Salah, more courageous than his colleagues, try to restrain them by his words: "Stay! stay! we cannot thus lose one of our co-religionists. Surely we must know what has become of him, or what has been done to him. Stay! stay!" But the co-religionists only ran away the faster, and soon the courageous caïd, led away by their example, followed them. They little knew what awaited them at the door of the theatre; but they had scarcely gone down the steps when they found themselves face to face with the "resuscitated Moor." The first movement of terror overcome, they surrounded the man, felt and cross-questioned him; but, annoyed by these repeated questions, he had no better resource than to escape at full speed.'

The blow was struck. Thenceforward, the interpreters, and all those who had dealings with the Arabs, received orders to make them understand that his pretended miracles were only the result of skill, inspired and guided by an art called *prestidigitation*, in no way connected with sorcery. The ambassador (most) extraordinary was now furnished with military protection, and made the tour of the provinces. He was everywhere received with great rapture and immense respect, being indeed taken for 'Shaitan,' or the devil, and treated and addressed accordingly. Only the marabouts stood out against him, and like some other professors we have heard of, underrated that art which they themselves practised with such inferior success. Once, indeed, our conjuror's reputation was put somewhat dangerously to the proof, and only saved by his own consummate presence of mind. A certain marabout being driven to the verge of madness by this rival's successful performances, addressed him, before a native assembly, with this perplexing proposition:

'"I now believe in your supernatural power," he said; "you are a real sorcerer; hence, I hope you will not fear to repeat here a trick you performed in your theatre;" and offering me two pistols he held concealed beneath his burnous, he added: "Come, choose one of these pistols; we will load it, and I will fire at you. You have nothing to fear, as you can ward off all blows." I confess I was for a moment staggered; I sought a subterfuge, and found none. All eyes were fixed upon me, and a reply was anxiously awaited. The marabout was triumphant. Bou-Allem, being aware that my tricks were only the result of skill, was angry that his guest should be so pestered; hence he began reproaching the marabout. I stopped him, however, for an idea had occurred to me which would save me from my dilemma, at least temporarily; then, addressing my adversary: "You are aware," I said, with assurance, "that I require a talisman in order to be invulnerable, and, unfortunately, I have left mine at Algiers." The marabout began laughing with an incredulous air. "Still," I continued, "I can, by remaining six hours at prayers, do without a talisman, and defy your weapon. To-morrow morning, at eight o'clock, I will allow you to fire at me in the presence of these Arabs, who were witnesses of your challenge." Bou-Allem, astonished at such a promise, asked me once again if this offer were serious, and if he should invite the company for the appointed hour. On my affirmative, they agreed to meet before the stone bench I have already alluded to. I did not spend my night at prayers, as may be supposed, but I employed about two hours in insuring my invulnerability; then, satisfied with the result, I slept soundly, for I was terribly tired. By eight the next morning we had breakfasted, our horses were saddled, and our escort was awaiting the signal for our departure, which would take place after the famous experiment. None of the guests were absent, and, indeed, a great number of Arabs came in to swell the crowd. The pistols were handed me; I called attention to the fact that the vents were clear, and the marabout put in a fair charge of powder, and drove the wad home. Among the bullets produced, I chose one which I openly put in the pistol, and which was then also covered with paper. The Arab watched all these movements, for his honour was at stake. We went through the same process with the second pistol, and the solemn moment arrived. Solemn, indeed, it seemed to everybody—to the spectators, who were uncertain of the issue; to Madame Houdin, who had in vain besought me to give up this trick, for she feared the result; and solemn also to me, for as my new trick did not depend on any of the arrangements made at Algiers, I feared an error, an act of treachery—I knew not what. Still, I posted myself at fifteen paces from the sheik, without evincing the slightest emotion. The marabout immediately seized one of the pistols, and, on my giving the signal, took a deliberate aim at me. The pistol went off, and the ball appeared between my teeth. More angry than ever, my rival tried to seize the other pistol, but I succeeded in reaching it before him. "You could not injure me," I said to him; "but you shall now see that my aim is more dangerous than yours. Look at that wall." I pulled the trigger, and on the newly whitewashed wall appeared a large patch of blood, exactly at the spot where I had aimed. The marabout went up to it, dipped his finger in the blood, and, raising it to his mouth, convinced himself of the reality. When he acquired this certainty, his arms fell, and his head was bowed on his chest, as if he were annihilated. It was evident that for the moment he doubted everything, even the Prophet.'

We thus conclude, after our author's own fashion, with perhaps the most striking performance in his *répertoire*, nor will we detract from the interest of his volumes by telling our readers by what simple means it was effected.

M. Robert Houdin would scarcely pardon us, for he is justly proud of his skill in science, if we omitted to state that the Exhibition of 1844 conferred upon him a medal for the construction of automata, and the Universal Exhibition a reward for several new applications of electricity to mechanism. Nevertheless, this Prince of Prestidigitation reserved always his best homage for his peculiar art; and while fully acknowledging, as we have seen, the value of ingenious application, regretted, doubtless, that Watt and Stephenson did not exhibit, like himself, upon a platform; and looked upon the accomplished Babbage as a conjuror spoiled.

LABYRINTHS.

The human mind has a constant yearning after mystery, and in the attempt to unravel it, finds no ordinary measure of gratification. So much is this the case, that even when mysteries do not lie in our way, we do not scruple to invent or construct them.

Something of the same tendency appears in the construction of those gigantic labyrinths, or architectural intricacies, the accounts of which, by Herodotus and others, fill us with wonder, which would be incredulity, had not traces of the works they speak of been identified by travellers even of the present day.

The immediate or literal design of the labyrinth is sufficiently indicated by the etymology of the word; it is derived from the Greek word signifying 'to take'—referring to the fact that they were so constructed as to render egress from them so difficult as to amount almost to an impossibility. They were thus, in a manner, colossal traps, or architectural net-work, which retained all that ventured within them. They could scarcely adopt as their motto, *nulla vestigia retrorsum*—but this was their aim, and their all but invariable result.

By far the most extensive structure of this kind, and in many respects also the most interesting, was that of ancient Egypt, which has been minutely described by Herodotus, as well as referred to more generally by Strabo, Pliny, and other writers. It was situated on the shores of Lake Mœris, although there is considerable difference of opinion on this point. According to Herodotus, it was placed near the City of Crocodiles, now better known as Arsinoë, or the Medinet-el-Faioum. Its dimensions and arrangements generally, as given by this historian, are such as to excite our admiration and wonder; even the Pyramids are represented as dwarfed in comparison. 'It is composed,' he says, 'of twelve courts, all of which are covered; their entrances are opposite to each other; six to the north, and six to the south; one wall encloses the whole; the apartments are of two kinds; there are fifteen hundred above ground, and as many beneath; in all three thousand.' He tells us that he was permitted to examine those above ground, and that he considered them as among the greatest triumphs of human industry and art. The winding passages from court to court seemed infinite in number, and the same is observed of the smaller chambers, opening at every turn into spacious and magnificent courts. The ceilings and walls were all of marble, and enriched by a vast variety of sculpture; while pillars of the same material, the whitest and most polished in the world, ran round the courts from end to end.

The subterranean part of this gigantic structure was jealously guarded from public gaze, being reserved for the preservation of the sacred crocodiles and the bodies of the kings by whom the labyrinth was built. The more minute account thus given by Herodotus receives considerable confirmation from the allusions made to it by other writers. According to Strabo, the passages and chambers were so artfully contrived, that it was impossible for any one to enter it and retrace his steps without a guide; while Pliny assures us that it was well worthy of the opinion so universally prevalent with regard to it.

With regard to the origin of such works, we must no doubt have recourse to the two great elements of ambition and superstition, which often, indeed, in such cases, work into each other's hands, and which have had no small share in prompting great human efforts in all ages and countries. Herodotus informs us that the labyrinth was built by the twelve kings who at that time reigned over Egypt, and whose desire was to leave a monument worthy of their renown; but there is nothing incompatible in linking with this the prevailing belief respecting the return of the spirit to the body after a lapse of ages, leading, as it naturally did, to the careful and sumptuous preservation of that body, first by embalming, and then by securing it in mausoleums of royal magnificence and adamantine strength.

The labyrinth of Crete takes the next place, although the very fact of its connection with the name of Dædalus invests it with a more mythic character. It receives prominent notice in classical antiquity, connected as it is with the unnatural passion of Pasiphaë and her monstrous progeny, the Minotaur. Dædalus himself was confined in it for a time by Minos, in consequence of his abetting the desires of the queen. It was here that this fabulous hero made wings of feathers and wax for himself and his son Icarus, who was his companion in prison; trusting to which, they took their flight through the air from Crete, with a result that is familiar to every student of Lemprier's Classical Dictionary. Such was the architect, and, in the first instance, the hero, of the labyrinth of Crete. It was afterwards made the prison of the Minotaur, where Athenian youth of both sexes were devoured by that monster—this tribute being exacted continually by Minos. At length the lot fell upon Theseus, who, however, being furnished with a clue by Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, was enabled to achieve the destruction of the monster, and to escape unhurt from the windings of the labyrinth, thus proving the deliverer of his country, and surrounding himself with a heroic fame.

So much for the mythical traditions of the place; but when we endeavour to pass into the clearer light of history, we find little indeed to gratify our curiosity, for, as it often happens when the mythic oracle is loud, the historic one is mute; the two voices are seldom heard together, and it is always a matter of suspicion when the former dogmatises with a shrill pipe and in unhesitating tones. Fiction seizes its opportunity when Truth is not at hand to correct or control.

The historic notices of this labyrinth are few and unsatisfactory. Diodorus and Pliny speak of it indeed, but the former only as a matter of conjecture. It is supposed by them to have been constructed on the model of the Egyptian one, though inferior in scale. The Abbé Barthelemy maintains that it was no more than a huge excavation or quarried cavern. The historians previously referred to tell us that there were no traces of it in their day, although some of their contemporaries are said to have visited it. Possibly the contradiction may receive its explanation in the supposition that the Cretans, wishing to preserve the celebrity of the place, had given to this mythic nothing 'a local habitation and a name.' We know that this would only accord with the mark which apostolic authority has set upon them, the Cretans, as being 'always liars'—although it must be admitted that if such a weakness were to be taken as a stern test of veracity, Cretans in abundance would be found in every country under heaven.

The Lemnian labyrinth is the next structure of the kind to which antiquity points. The island of Lemnos is situated in the Ægean Sea, between the Trojan shore and Mount Athos. It was dedicated to Vulcan, and was supposed to have been the spot on which he alighted, when precipitated from heaven by the king of gods and men.

The fact of the inhabitants being chiefly of the craft of blacksmiths, gave a sort of consistency to the legend, as well as an air of truthfulness to the poetic myth which fixed in this island the forges of Vulcan. The labyrinth was said to have been even more splendid than that of Egypt or Crete, although it must be confessed that time has left very little by which to substantiate such a statement. Pliny affects to give some description of it, and asserts that there were some remains of it in his day. According to this writer, it had a hundred and forty columns of marble, 'all wrought round by turners' craft.' It had also massive gates and numerous statues, which imparted to it a rich and imposing appearance. The merit of devising and constructing it is divided among three otherwise unknown names—Zmilus, Rholus, and Theodorus. Dr Hunt and Professor Carlyle sought in vain for any traces of this edifice; and while it might be going too far to deny that it ever existed, there seems to be good reason to conclude that the accounts are chargeable with very material exaggeration.

The fourth and last of these ancient structures was that in Italy, ascribed to Porsenna, king of Tuscany, who caused it to be built for his own sepulchre. 'King Porsenna,' says M. Varro, 'was interred under the city Elusinum, in Tuscane, in which verie place be left a sumptuous monument or tombe, built all of square stone, within the base or foot, whereof he made a labyrinth so intricat, that if a man were entered into it, without a bottom or clue of thread in his hand, and leaving the one end thereof fastened to the entrie or dore, it was impossible that he should ever find the way out again.' He then proceeds with a minute description of the building, with its rows of pyramids, three tiers of which rose, one above another, into the air, to such a great elevation, that the narrator confesses himself ashamed to name the height to which they reached. The cost of this work seems to have been so great, and its utility so trifling, as to prompt some sage moralising on the part of the historian who undertakes to describe it. He speaks of the 'outrageous madness of the foolish prince' who sought such a worthless immortality at the expense of his subjects, and to the injury of his kingdom; and mentions, as a sad commentary on such forms of posthumous ambition, that the artificer 'who enterprised and finished the worke, went away with the greater part of the glorie.'

Although the word labyrinth chiefly points back to a more or less distant antiquity, it is not altogether unassociated with more modern times. In connection with that very equivocal and artificial taste which was introduced into the gardening of France and Holland, the labyrinth found a place as an amusing conceit, if not as a very tasteful ornament—an example of this may be seen at Versailles; while in our own country, specimens exist in Hampton Court Gardens, and in those of Trinity College, Oxford, besides less important follies of the kind throughout the kingdom.

The one most tenderly associated with English history was that of Woodstock, where once stood a royal palace, a favourite residence of several of the kings of England. It continued till the reign of Charles I., when it was allowed to fall into a state of ruin. Here resided the hapless mistress of Henry II., Fair Rosamond, the beautiful daughter of Lord Clifford. To protect her from the jealousy of Eleanor his queen, he kept her in a bower in the labyrinth of Woodstock, afterwards known as Rosamond's Bower. His precautions, however, were vain, as, by means of a clue of silk thread, the queen discovered her apartments, and succeeded in freeing herself of her rival by the expedient of poisoning. The remarkable beauty of the lady—her tender youth —her gentle and pensive disposition, together with her lonely life and tragic death, have all contributed to invest the 'Fair Rosamond' with a touching interest, and to make her story one of the most affecting episodes in our historic annals.

Although labyrinths, properly considered, are now a thing of the past, the word itself survives, somewhat phonetically descriptive of the idea it expresses. It has passed now almost into a mere figure of speech, and finds a fitting application in connection with all that is intricate and perplexing in the deep questions of philosophy or morals.

> Mark how the labyrinthian turns they take,
> The circles intricate, and mystic maze.

The idea was seemingly present to the mind of Milton, although the old English word is employed. When describing the occupation of some of the 'better sort' of the fallen 'powers,' he says:

> Others apart sat on a hill retired,
> In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
> Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,
> Fixed fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute,
> And found no end in wandering *mazes* lost.

In this general sense, the word finds an extensive and varied application; we talk of a labyrinthian style, a labyrinthian lawsuit, a labyrinthian oration, and such like. It is one of those cases in which the abstract idea survives in the word, long after its material substratum has disappeared; and thus reminds us not merely of the ductility of language, but of the readiness with which it is transferred from those material substances and forms with which it was originally connected, to the more subtle and impalpable ideas of the mind, with which these hold some perceptible analogy.

A ROMANCE THROUGH A BEDROOM WINDOW.

CHAPTER III.—LA GRANDE ARTISTE.

THE day following my midnight interview with M. Darron on the Grande Place, I received a note from him enclosing an order for the opera for that night. I need not say that I availed myself of it when the time arrived. The mystery that hung about the beautiful young singer and her strange home had so deepened of late, that I found myself unable to check the growing interest I felt in all that concerned her. Could it be that some terrible secret really clung to the inmates of that gloomy house? The light that burned there nightly, the apparition on the roof, and the fearful laughter I had heard, were more than enough to rouse suspicion. Was it possible that Josephine Darron, the great actress and singer, was a sleep-walker? or, worse still, the victim of a diseased mind? The idea was too horrible. And yet that same night, when she appeared before me on the stage, singing with a supernatural pathos, I seemed again to have before my eyes the very figure I had seen on the roof of the old house tossing its arms wildly to the sky.

The terrible fascination which this thought gave to every look and movement of the actress, I cannot describe. I left the theatre in a state of wretched excitement.

The next morning, I resolved to call on M. Darron, to thank him for the ticket. As I rang the bell at the door of the gloomy house, I looked up at the closed windows with many curious speculations. It was evident that there were no other tenants in the house, for all the lower floors were unoccupied, and the bell handles belonging to them were rusty. The door opened at length, and the masculine-looking woman with the gold ear-rings and high cap demanded my business with an air of grim surprise. Evidently hesitating as to the policy of the proceeding, she bade me walk in, locked the door again, and ushered me up a great flight of stone stairs. The noise of our footsteps, as we ascended, echoed drearily in the empty chambers we passed, and through the half-opened shutters of the staircase windows, dusty streaks of sunlight fell athwart our path. Marthe spoke not a word, but coughed a bass cough—of dissatisfaction, I thought—every time we reached a landing. At length we arrived on the fourth floor; and passing through a gloomy little anteroom, Marthe led me into a large cool-looking chamber, adorned with mirrors and dark furniture. An open piano stood in one corner, and sheets of manuscript music littered the chairs and floor. I could hear M. Darron's violin in an inner room. Marthe, who had all along eyed me with considerable suspicion, now bade me sit down, whilst she summoned her master. I remarked that the grim woman carried a great bunch of keys at her side, and unlocked and relocked all the doors with methodical care.

In two or three minutes, M. Darron appeared, wearing an old dressing-gown and shabby slippers, and carrying his violin in his hand. From the coldness of his reception, I feared he considered my visit an intrusion. I proceeded to thank him for the great pleasure he had afforded me, and begged that Mademoiselle Josephine would accept the bouquet of flowers I had ventured to bring her; then, as I had nothing more to say, I sat in silence.

'You are very polite, monsieur, and my daughter will thank you.'

The old man took the flowers, and laid them on the piano; he then resumed his seat, and sat looking at me, as though he wished to know what other reason I had for coming there. As I was scarcely in a position to explain, I took refuge in some generality of conversation, only, however, to subside again into silence, for my host gave me no encouragement to proceed. How I should have fared, I know not, had not the door opened, and Mademoiselle Darron appeared at this crisis. She did not see me on entering; but, taking up the flowers from the piano, exclaimed: 'How kind of you, mon papa, to buy me these lovely flowers!' Then, perceiving me, she bowed with an air of surprise, and looked towards her father for an explanation.

'It is this English gentleman whom you must thank for your nosegay, Josephine. He has called, I believe, purposely to present it to you.'

Mademoiselle Darron thanked me, in a few simple words. From her unconstrained manner, it was evident that the presence of a stranger did not disturb her, as it did her father; or, it might be, that his embarrassment gave her self-possession; for, after an awkward pause, during which M. Darron drew a few plaintive notes from his violin, as he sat nervously caressing it, she led the conversation to my recent accident, and spoke of my long confinement to my room, of which her father had told her. Whilst mademoiselle expressed her sympathy in a most natural manner, and filled me with admiration of her grace and tact, I remarked how pale and worn she looked. Her eyes had a haggard expression that told of powers overtaxed, I thought. I could not have supposed that that gentle calmness of demeanour could have consisted with the fire and energy I had witnessed on the stage. There was something very charming in the simplicity and good sense that characterised all Mademoiselle Darron's remarks. Whilst our conversation was going on, I noticed that M. Darron remained silent, and I thought he watched his daughter with an anxious eye. When Josephine rose and left the room to seek a vase for the flowers, M. Darron crossed over and came and seated himself by my side.

'Sir, I know not what other motives you can have in seeking our acquaintance than those you have already assigned. I am content to believe in them. It rejoices me to see my daughter interested in anything or in any one. Her life is not so bright or gay as the life of a young person should be. Yet, monsieur, I regret to say that I cannot welcome you to my house as I should wish. My home is of necessity a quiet, a secluded one. Therefore, though I thank you, monsieur, for the friendly interest you testify, and beg you to continue it, you must pardon me for not returning the same after the manner of the world.'

His daughter entered, and he ceased speaking. Shortly after, I withdrew. Marthe reappeared to conduct me to the door, and again we went through the same process of locking and unlocking, until we reached the ground-floor, where my conductress grimly took leave of me.

During the week that followed, I made some little further advance in my acquaintance with my mysterious neighbours: I ventured to leave a basket of choice fruit one morning; on another, I carried mademoiselle some English books she had expressed a wish to read; and M. Darron did not seem displeased at these attentions, although his nervousness and reserve of manner never wore off. One evening, when thanking me for some trifle or other, he suddenly exclaimed: 'Monsieur, I am glad of anything that will interest or rouse my daughter. Think you that she looks better, gayer than she did? Bah! how can you judge? I forget what I say;' and he proceeded rapidly to another subject.

I had now been one month in L——; I had recovered from my lameness, and dismissed my doctor, yet I felt loath to quit the place, and had made no plans for further travel. They were made for me, however, by others.

A letter from an old friend reached me at this time, informing me that, if I had any wish to see him again ere he left Europe, I must proceed to Marseille within three or four days, as he was just starting for the east. As he was one whom I valued highly, I did not hesitate for a moment, but resolved to quit L—— at the end of two days. I was on my way to the post-office in the Rue du Bac to despatch my letter, when I caught sight of the words 'Darron,' 'sudden illness,' staring out of a large bill placarded on a wall: 'The sudden illness of Mademoiselle Darron compelled the manager to substitute another opera this evening, which he trusted would be,' &c.

I had seen mademoiselle only the day before, and had already taken a place for that night. I turned my back on the theatre, and wandered away to the outskirts of the town.

There were some pleasant fields by the river-side, where I had often lounged away an idle hour; I sought them now, and sat down on the grassy slope. Near at hand were some women washing their linen in the stream, and I could hear the measured thump, thump, as they beat their clothes upon the stones, and, now and then, their voices as they hailed some sunburnt fisherman returning up the river in the golden light. I sat drowsily watching the chips and straws float by—drowsily listening to the thump, thump of the washerwomen—drowsily conscious of the people passing along the footpath behind me.

It was growing dusk when I noticed the figure of an old man standing close to the water's edge, a few yards from where I lay. He was looking steadily at the stream, and leaned on his stick, as if in meditation. It was M. Darron. Surprised to see him there, when his daughter was lying ill, I rose and approached him. He started back when I spoke, but, upon recognising me, recovered his composure.

'Yes, monsieur, my poor Josephine is ill—very ill. She tells me she will soon be well again; but her illness is not one that is soon cured, I fear;' and he sighed heavily, and shook his head.

I was uttering some words of hope, when M. Darron turned round to me with a warmth of manner I had never seen in him before.

'Monsieur, you know what my daughter, my Josephine, is to me; you know how God has gifted her: figure, then, what I suffer to see her pining away—dying before my eyes! And so young—so young!'

His voice shook, and he stopped. M. Darron was in a mood unlike any I had ever beheld him in. Whether it was that the twilight did away with his natural reserve, or that an uncontrollable desire to pour out his sorrows into some friendly ear had seized him, I know not; but we sat down upon the bank, and he talked to me as though I had been the friend of years. His revelation ran thus:

Josephine, his idolised daughter, was dying of a broken heart. Though she appeared before the world full of the energy of genius, and could arouse the emotions of an audience at her will, she was sinking under a malady 'which was slowly devouring her life,' as M. Darron expressed it. Three years ago, her hand had been sought by a young officer who had been brought up in the same place—a town on the German frontiers—where her own youth was passed. He had studied the violin under M. Darron, and of all his pupils, was the one the old music-master most favoured. But, in spite of his regard for Fabien de Moléon, M. Darron shewed small favour to his suit. He had other views for his daughter. His ambition was to see her 'grande artiste,' as he said; and he was looking forward to the day when the hopes of a lifetime would be repaid in the fame of his child. Moreover, Fabien de Moléon was of a poor but noble family; and when Madame de Moléon, his mother, heard of the attachment he had formed for the daughter of his music-master, she determined to leave no means untried to break it off. Threats and caresses were tried in vain. The young lieutenant declared his love to be unalterable. So Madame de Moléon resolved to trust to the pride and generosity of Josephine, to liberate her son from his engagement. In a secret visit to the music-master's daughter, she represented to her how her son's prospects in life would be ruined by such an alliance; how he would incur the enmity of all his friends; and how the best proof of her love for him would be shewn in putting an end to their engagement at once. The appeal to the girl's dignity and affection was not in vain; Josephine renounced her lover, and believed she had done right. Had she known what a cruel stab she was inflicting on a heart that beat only for her, she could not have carried out her sacrifice. De Moléon wrote her one letter which she had carried ever since in her bosom, as the poor penitent wears the shirt of hair to scourge his guilty flesh. It lay there burning out her heart, for its words were heated with the scorn and indignation of him whom she loved best in the world. De Moléon returned to her all her gifts and letters, and left home suddenly, cutting off all traces to his retreat. From that hour, Josephine Darron devoted herself to her art with the whole energy of her nature. 'And now I have gained my wish!' continued the old man bitterly. 'She has earned the fame I coveted; but her heart is breaking. Fools—fools that we are! What need had I to change my name, and assume that of Darron, in order to elude De Moléon's pursuit! I would give all I have could I now recall him to her feet.'

Such was the story confided to my ears by the old man's trembling lips as we sat by the river-side in the deepening twilight. I parted with M. Darron at the door of my hotel, and retired to my room, pondering on the history I had heard. As yet, I felt I had not fully fathomed the mystery of that household; M. Darron, I feared, had concealed from me the worst calamity—the one more terrible than death, that threatened his daughter.

The next day, I felt sure it would not be regarded as an intrusion were I to call and inquire after Mademoiselle Darron's health. I had already noticed several inquirers at the door; for, in spite of their secluded habits, the residence of the popular singer was becoming known. Marthe, I observed, gave prompt replies, but admitted none. For myself, I augured an exception would be permitted.

But when I presented myself to the grim custodian, she replied in a surly way that 'she was not sure whether her master *was* at home—thought he *wouldn't* see me—could I leave a message instead?' And evidently against her will, and with a very bad grace, at last allowed me to enter.

'Yes, ma'mselle was still ill,' she replied, in answer to my inquiries as we ascended the stairs. 'No, she didn't quit her room—couldn't say whether she was better than she was yesterday.' Here all further inquiries were put an end to by a violent fit of coughing which seized Marthe just as we reached the second landing. By the time it had subsided, we had reached the fourth floor.

'Enter, monsieur,' said Marthe, throwing open a door, and pointing forward with a stalwart arm.

It was the anteroom I have before mentioned—a dark, gloomy little chamber, with doors on either side communicating with other apartments. Near one of these doors stood a large folding-screen, which added to the sombre aspect of the room. Marching across the polished floor before me, Marthe suddenly stopped. 'Peste! where have I put my keys, then?' she exclaimed, making active search for the same. 'Ah, mule's head, I must have left them below. In two minutes, monsieur, I will return;' and she hurried down stairs with rapid steps.

But the two minutes expired, and Marthe returned not; the keys were not forthcoming, it appeared. I stood listening for the sound of her returning footsteps on the stairs, when I suddenly heard a strange noise in the room: it seemed like the breathing of an animal, and came, I thought, from behind the screen. I listened: all was still. No; there it was again—a heavy, measured respiration, close at hand. I could not describe the strange fear that crept over me at the sound. I stood rooted to the ground. The next moment, the screen trembled from top to bottom, and a wild figure rushed out from behind it, and stood staring at me with shining eyes. Good Heaven, it was Josephine Darron!

'Hush!' she whispered, placing her finger to her lips—'Hush! They don't know. See here!'

She held up Marthe's great bunch of keys, and looked at me with a fearful idiotic smile.

'Ah, ah! you won't tell?' She jingled the bunch of keys, darted through the side-door near her, and, flinging herself on the floor of the adjoining room, burst into a loud, mad shriek of laughter.

Had I come suddenly upon her dead body lying in the room, it would not have filled me with such horror. There, grovelling on the floor in idiotic mirth, lay that beautiful and gifted girl—lay there, babbling, stricken, mad! I cast one glance at the unhappy creature, felt a sudden sense of suffocation seize me, and hastened rapidly from the room.

I have some recollection of passing Marthe rushing up the stairs, and of finding the street-door wide open, but I remember nothing clearly for the first few minutes after I had made this terrible discovery. I hastened rapidly through the streets; and when at last I stopped, found myself in a narrow road outside of the city, shaded by some lofty trees growing in the garden of an old monastery. I sat down upon a stone by the monastery wall, and paused a while to think.

Horrible realisation of my worst fears! Josephine Darron was mad. There was something so appalling in the idea, that I tried to explain it away. Could I have been deceived? Had not my fancy cheated me in that dark chamber? No, it was useless. I could not reject the evidence of my senses. I recollected even that the very dress of that stricken creature was the one Mademoiselle Darron always wore—the pale gray stuff. It was she, and none else. When at last I returned to my hotel, I do not think I cast another glance at the house that contained that terrible secret; the whole place had become intolerable to me. The next morning, I quitted L——, and bade farewell to my old chamber under the roof where I had viewed the first scenes of this strange drama, yet to be played out before my eyes.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CATASTROPHE.

Arrived at Marseille, I found that all the distractions of travel and new scenes, powerfully as they influenced me, were unable to drive away the recollection of the old house on the Grande Place of L—— and its inmates. At night, I saw in my dreams the light burning in the casement; by day, I heard that fearful laughter ring in my ears. Even when I stood in the midst of a busy street or on a crowded quay, I would start at the sound; and my friend rallied me for having grown nervous with my confinement to my room.

Ere long, the day came when I grasped this friend's hand for the last time, and saw him recede from my eyes, waving his hat and shouting an English cheer, on the deck of the great ship steaming out for Alexandria. I stood there, watching the vessel till it had cleared the port, and passed out into the dazzling sheen of waters lying without the harbour. All day long, I wandered about the quays, idling amongst the various groups, and gazing out, ever and anon, on the horizon down which the outward-bound vessel had dropped, and left a whole sea between us. At sunset, I was still there, looking out upon what, a few hours since, had been a mere speck upon the waters, but was now a noble ship, close upon the harbour. It was a government transport, bringing home troops from Algiers, I was told. I watched the landing of the bronzed warriors, and all the bustle consequent on their debarkation, and then made my way home to the hotel, stopping at the *bureau des diligences*, on the way, to secure a place back to Paris for the morrow.

When I reached the diligence-office next morning, I found that the place I had taken in the *coupé* was already occupied. Coolly installed in the seat for which I had paid my francs overnight, sat a dark, sunburnt officer. Remonstrating on this usurpation, and determined to have either the seat I had taken, or none, I quickly found myself involved in a noisy altercation with the officials of the bureau.

'Monsieur's seat was on the *banquette*.' 'All the places for the interior had been taken twenty-four hours ago.' 'Monsieur deceived himself; he could not have taken that seat last night; it was impossible.'

But monsieur was determined to prove it otherwise. It was evidently a conspiracy on the part of the bureau to shew favour to a 'brave militaire'—who, from the attention shewn him, was probably an officer returned from Algeria by the *Duc de Joinville* last night—at the expense of a stranger. To what lengths the mendacity of my opponents would have carried me, I dare not conjecture. I had my hand on my carpet-bag, and was on the point of pitching it at the chief *commis*, when the officer put his head out of the window, and begged to know what was the matter. No sooner had he heard, than he alighted, and requested to see the way-bill of travellers.

'Monsieur,' said the stranger, turning round to me, when he had run his eye over the list, 'the place is undoubtedly yours. I ask a thousand pardons for the incivilities you have been subjected to. For myself, I knew not I was trespassing on your rights; but for these people here'—— His voice sounded like a trumpet through the court, as he bade them remove his cloak and luggage to the banquette, and he read a lecture to 'Messieurs les Commis' such as was new to the 'Bureau des Messageries' at Marseille.

There was something so frank and prepossessing in the manners of Le Colonel Rembert—as the sunburnt officer was styled on the way-bill—that when I saw him mount on to the banquette, I began to regret that my seat was not there likewise; and so, regardless of inconsistency, I contrived, at the end of the first stage, to effect an exchange that placed me by his side. Pleased with this tacit compliment, the young officer hastened to shew me attention, and in a short time we were discussing the topics of the day with interest on both sides. Colonel Rembert had been away from home for some years, and shewed a lively interest in the affairs of his country. As I suspected, he had just returned from Algiers, where he had gained promotion and the scar that seamed his dark face.

In those days of wearisome travelling, I should have found the journey intolerable but for the society of my new acquaintance. We were three days making our way back to L——, which lay between us and Paris, and all that time the autumn sun shone down with a tropical intensity upon the long and dusty roads.

As there were no means of proceeding to Paris until the following day, Colonel Rembert—between whom and myself a very friendly feeling had sprung up—decided to accompany me to the hotel where I was about to stay. It was not the old one on the Grande Place, associated with so many memories, but was situated in another quarter of the town, near the Rue Hérold.

I was burning with anxiety to put some questions to the people of the hotel respecting the Darrons, but a horror of hearing their history discussed in a public room prevented me. As we sat at table, I could see through the hotel windows some old tattered playbills on a wall opposite, announcing Mademoiselle Darron's appearance in one of her favourite parts. It was a ghastly mockery that made my heart ache.

Colonel Rembert joined in the conversation going on with the zest of a man long absent from his country. As an officer returned from foreign service, he carried with him a passport to general favour. André, the waiter, like a true son of France, hovered assiduously about his chair, and brought him the finest peaches, the coolest wines he could lay his hands on.

'What a happy man you are!' I exclaimed, as we rose from the table together. 'Going home to your friends—returning to Paris; why, with those medals and decorations of yours, you will be the lion of your circle for a month to come!'

'Circle?—Friends? Pshaw! A soldier's circle is in the mess-room—his friends, his brother-officers. I shall not make the sensation you anticipate for me, mon ami;' and he laughed rather bitterly, I thought.

I looked at him earnestly as he sat turning over the leaves of a journal at a side-table. Colonel Rembert was perhaps a man to be less envied than I had imagined. There were traces of other rough usage than that the vicissitudes of a soldier's life bring with it, in the lines that furrowed his face. He was still looking over the paper, when he exclaimed: 'There is an opera, I see, in L—— to-night. Who is this going to play Amina in *La Sonnambula*? Darron, Mademoiselle Darron, is the lady's name?'

'What! To-night? Mademoiselle Darron?' I ejaculated, snatching the paper from his hands. 'Where? Where did you see it? You are wrong—you are wrong.'

'Pardon me—see there!' and Colonel Rembert stared at me in amazement, as he pointed to the paragraph. My senses refused to comprehend it. There, on the printed page I held, it was announced that Josephine Darron would make her first appearance since her recent illness, that very night! I stood speechless.

'You know the lady, perhaps? Is she really as great a genius as the press of L—— would have one believe?' asked Colonel Rembert. 'What say you to our going to judge for ourselves? I am an idle man to-night.'

'Go?' I exclaimed: 'yes, at once—this very moment. We shall yet be there in time;' and, without offering an explanation, I hurried my companion into the street. We reached the doors of the theatre before I had time even to do more than inform him that I knew Mademoiselle Darron, as he supposed, and on quitting L—— a short time since, had left her dangerously ill. I have no recollection of his reply; I only remember that we went in with a dense crowd, and that the house was filled throughout, five minutes after the doors were opened. Once I turned to a neighbour in the pit, and demanded of him if the principal singer had been long ill.

'La Darron? O no; only a little indisposition,' he supposed. 'We could not afford to lose our star yet—no, no;' and he shrugged his shoulders and went on laughing and talking with the friend by his side. I felt sick with apprehension. Could it be possible that I was awaiting the appearance on the stage of her whom I had last seen in a paroxysm of insanity? Josephine Darron, even had she recovered her reason, could not be returning to her profession again: the idea was monstrous, revolting. I sat beating away the wild fancies that rose up before me as I watched for the uprising of the curtain.

At length a bell tinkled, strains of music broke from the orchestra, and the curtain slowly rose. I could see nothing at first for the sudden agitation that came over me; then, when I had grown calmer, I beheld the group of village maidens awaiting the appearance of Amina. After the opening music had been sung, there was a silvery laugh heard, and the next moment, amidst the silence of the audience, the heroine came on. She bends low before the thunders of applause that burst forth, then advances to gather up the bouquets that are thrown her. She has reached the footlights, and stands in the full blaze of the whole house. It is none other—it is Josephine Darron!

To see her standing there, beautiful and self-possessed, with that other picture of her in my memory, was at once the saddest and most appalling contradiction. Not the pang I suffered in finding her mad on the floor of her chamber equalled what I endured in beholding her there now. Her glance ran round the house in acknowledgment of the applause, and then she threw herself into her part with all the *abandon* and freshness of her own bright genius. Knowing what I did, I felt that it was impossible for me to remain a spectator. I was on the point of withdrawing, when suddenly the bird-like voice on which every ear hung entranced, ceased. Mademoiselle Darron, in one moment, had turned ashy white, and stood trembling in every limb. There was a wild gleam in her eye, and her gaze was fastened on the spot where I sat, as though she beheld a spectre there. The chorus, in affright, started back, and stood gazing at her as at one possessed; the orchestra grew mute, while a terrible silence settled over the whole house. What is it that Mademoiselle Darron sees in us that she stares thus wildly? Her lips work as though she strove to articulate; one hand is pressed on her brow, the other on her heart; she is convulsed; she is going mad. The next moment, a loud cry rang through the theatre, and Josephine Darron fell, like one dead, upon the floor.

The whole house was a scene of uproar; on all sides there was a clamouring of voices, and dismay. I saw the black curtain sinking down, and beheld a gray-haired old man carried out from the orchestra; but I saw no more. My hand was grasped as though in a vice by the companion at my side. Colonel Rembert seemed suffocating. Great drops of sweat stood upon his brow, and a hoarse sound issued from his chest. With an immense effort, he stood up, and broke a way through the mass of human beings about us. I followed on his steps, hastening I knew not whither, but conscious that a crisis was at hand.

I have a recollection of traversing lobbies and dim passages, of diving into strange, lamp-lighted recesses, of coming suddenly upon motley groups in stage costume. On all sides, people gave way before my companion; there was that in his air that told them it would be dangerous to intercept him. At length we reached the green-room; there, surrounded by the frightened people of the place, lay Josephine Darron, pale and lifeless, as they had borne her from the stage. Colonel Rembert was at her side in a moment. One glance at his face, as he bent over her, revealed to me the right by which he approached her thus: it was Fabien de Moléon who knelt by her couch.

'Air—air!' he cried; and he put aside the thronging women, and took her in his arms.

None questioned the right by which he assumed authority there.

'Where is her father? Where is her home here? Who knows?'

He looked round, and his eye caught mine. I was endeavouring to rouse M. Darron, who was lying almost insensible on a bench near. The old man heard the voice, and looked round.

'Home, Fabien? Yes; what is it? I am better now; we must go home. O God, my daughter!' The sight of his child had restored to him suddenly a knowledge of what had happened.

I had sent for a carriage, and hastened to tell Colonel Rembert it was at the door. My anxiety to remove them from this place was great; I dreaded the exposure that would follow on Josephine's recovery. Perhaps, now, her reason had fled for ever.

When at last we reached the old house on the Grande Place, it tortured me to think of the terrible discovery the brave colonel had still to make. Little did he dream, as he bore his loved burden up the old stairs, what a fearful change sorrow had wrought there. I could have prayed, as I saw her lying in his arms, that that might be death which looked so like it. Better her spirit should pass away thus, than return to a home where there was darkness deeper than that of the grave.

But no, she lives! Josephine Darron stirs, sighs, then opens her eyes, and gazes up into the face bending over her. There is a smile upon her face—a smile of reason—of deep content. We stand around in silence, Marthe, M. Darron, and I. Josephine is speaking to De Moléon in a low and gentle voice; Marthe, the grim, grenadier-like Marthe, is weeping; M. Darron is gazing at them with a working face; and I—I am awaking from the nightmare that has oppressed me these many weeks.

See, there is a strange figure hovering in the background! The door at the further end of the room has slowly opened, and *another Josephine* stands staring at the scene!

'O Heaven! it is Louise!' screams Marthe, wringing her hands in dismay.

'Louise, my poor Louise; come here, sister.' Josephine Darron half rose from her couch, and spoke in the tone in which one addresses a child. 'You love to see me happy, Louise? Well, I am happy, very happy, to-night.' She drew the forlorn figure to her side, and kissed her on the brow.

The girl looked strangely at us, then laughed a low, idiotic laugh, and began playing with Josephine's long hair. Even there, side by side, there is the same likeness to be seen; and, as I gaze at them, the secret of that gloomy household, the mystery of many weeks, reveals itself to my wondering eyes. In that blighted creature crooning at Josephine's side, I recognise the spectre that has long haunted me—it is Mademoiselle Darron's twin-sister.

It was a strange scene on which the moon shone that night in the old chamber. I see it all before me now: the grim-faced Marthe; the gray-haired father; the poor idiot girl, twining her long fingers in her sister's hair; and, bright centre of it all, Josephine, with peace shining in her face, and her hand clasped in that of the sunburnt soldier.

There remains little to be said. Ere I quitted L——, Josephine Duménil—Darron being the name, as I have said, which she had assumed on entering her profession—became the wife of Colonel de Moléon. Our intimacy, commenced so strangely, continues to this day, and, until her private history became known to me, I little dreamed of the beauty and heroism Josephine's life had displayed. Bound by a promise to her dying mother never to forsake her twin-sister, nor to leave her to the care of strangers, she had nobly fulfilled her charge. Aided by their old servant, Marthe, she had watched over her with a devotion that was sublime in its sacrifice of self. She had been repaid in the docile affection of the idiot girl. In her wildest moods, Louise was obedient to Josephine's voice, and often, when some cruel fancy or wild excitement preyed on the poor sufferer, the 'grande artiste' would rise from her bed, and sing the maniac girl to sleep.

When these and other things were made known to me in the days that followed, I felt that beautiful as the life of the young singer had seemed to me, viewed in the light of her genius and her sorrows, yet its truest beauties had been those known only to her own household on the Grande Place of L——.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Among the freshest and most interesting of scientific topics, are certain facts concerning which our geologists are in a state of surprise and excitement; so much so, that an extraordinary meeting of the Geological Society was held to discuss the matter. One is the discovery of flint implements—knives and axe-heads—near Amiens, at the bottom of a stratum of gravel, and from nineteen to twenty-five feet below the surface. The things have been actually found *in situ*—some by English geologists—where there is no appearance of the gravel ever having been previously disturbed; and what is more remarkable, in a spot which forms the top of a hill. The implements are in great numbers; and the conclusion is, that they testify to the existence of man on the earth, at a period anterior to that commonly supposed, thus confirming similar conclusions drawn from the discoveries made in the Brixham cave, and elsewhere. The other fact is one which we have heretofore incidentally mentioned: the exploration of a cave, Grotta di Maccagnone, near Palermo, by Dr Falconer, where bones of extinct species of animals were found in astonishing quantities, along with fragments of charcoal, and knives of flint and agate in great number imbedded in the breccia. The importance of this discovery may be judged of from the fact that hippopotami appear to have swarmed on the spot. Of the bone known to anatomists as the astragalus, Dr Falconer picked up nearly a hundred examples within the space of a few feet; and this bone is so easy of identification, as to leave no room for doubt. The existence of the bones has long been known to the natives, who have at times taken from the ancient store to burn into ivory-black; but this is the first scientific investigation that has been made of the interesting deposit.

Professor Sylvester, of the Royal Military Academy, whose name stands among the foremost of mathematicians, has given a course of lectures at King's College on some new discoveries with respect to the partitions of numbers, and of applications of the theory arising therefrom. His audience has been fit though few, comprising the most eminent geometers and mathematicians; and he has surprised them all by the skill and ingenuity with which he has illustrated abstruse problems by mechanical means: not less admirable than the mechanical illustrations of the complex forms of crystals shewn by the Rev. W. Mitchell in his lecture at the Royal Institution.

Submarine telegraphy is making good progress: another cable is to be laid from the coast of Norfolk to Tonning, in Denmark—three hundred and eighty-eight miles. The benefit of the Red Sea telegraph has been already felt in the earlier arrival of the Indian advices by nearly a week. There would have been direct communication ere this from Aden to London through Constantinople, had not a temporary failure occurred in the attempt to lay a line from Alexandria to Candia. It is probable that by the time these lines appear in print, the failure will have been rectified, and it will be scarce a figure of speech to say that the West shakes hands with the East. A line is to be laid from Sicily to Malta; and it appears that another trial is to be made to span the great ocean, by a new Atlantic telegraph company with a guarantee from government. Guided by experience, they intend to use the lightest and at the same time strongest form of cable; and if the *Great Eastern* should become available before the autumnal equinox sets in, a new trial may be made with reasonable chance of success. Meantime, certain experimentalists are busy with what they call the Globe telegraph; that is, they send the signal through the earth, and only use an insulated wire for the return current. The signal current is generated by plates of iron, platinum, and zinc, buried in the ground, and is sufficiently powerful to produce a deflection of the needles, irrespective, as the experimenters say, of distance.

A suggestion has been thrown out, that if the cable were sunk but a few feet beneath the surface, and there suspended by elastic spiral buoys, it would answer its purpose better, and be more easy of repair and recovery, than when sunk to the very bottom of the ocean. We may inquire, in reply, whether such a cable would resist an Atlantic storm or a floating iceberg? On the other hand, Lieutenant Maury, of the National Observatory, Washington, shews that there are the best of all reasons for sinking the cable to the bottom: because once at rest on the bottom, and properly coated, it will be indestructible. He holds, that it was a mistake to twist the heavy iron coat round the conducting wire, necessitating a cumbrous system of brakes in the paying-out; because, if only made heavy enough to sink, the telegraphic cord will be quite safe when sunk to the bottom. He shews, what is well known to sailors, that if you twist a spiral covering round a straight core, it is always the core or heart which suffers most, and gives way first, when subject to strain. So, instead of a heavy, stiff iron cable, he would have his copper wires prepared and coated in the way described as 'Rogers's cord,' which is not larger than a common log-line, and which can be payed out without difficulty in the ordinary voyage of a ship. Such a cord will sink at the rate of about two miles an hour; and Lieutenant Maury feels confident that a divergence of half a mile is all that is to be apprehended from currents. He professes to deal only with the Neptunian part of the question, leaving the electrical to others, and thinks that he has resolved the difficulty. 'I have no doubt whatever,' he says, 'as to the ultimate success of a telegraph across the Atlantic. The sea offers no obstruction on account of its depths or its currents to lines of any length. A line, with an unbroken conducting wire, across the

Atlantic or the Pacific, is as practicable as one across the Alps or the Andes. In the long-run, and mile for mile, I do not think there would be much, if any difference in cost between the two. The real question for future projectors of lines of submarine telegraph is, not how deep, or how boisterous, or how wide the sea is, but what are the electrical limits to the length of submarine lines.'

The Society of Arts have held their eighth annual conference with the institutions in union, and their 105th anniversary meeting. They have published full particulars concerning the preparation and use of water-glass—the silicious fluid which has been sometimes called oil of flint. Four kinds are described: potash water-glass; soda water-glass; double water-glass; and a fixing water-glass. The subject is well worthy of consideration, because water-glass, besides being applicable as a varnish to preserve walls and buildings, can be advantageously used for decorative purposes, internal as well as external: as an element of beauty as well as of strength and durability.

Another matter taken up by the Society is that of a uniform musical pitch. They have held a meeting to consider it, presided over by Dr Whewell; but the question is one which cannot be decided off-hand, being beset by essential difficulties. For instance, the pitch of an instrument varies in the same room, and is never the same at night in the heat of gas and a large audience, as during the day. The tendency for some years past has been towards a raising of the pitch, hence voices are strained and overstrained, and utterly ruined, which might have lasted for years with fair-play. A uniform pitch has lately been adopted in France; and some professors think that the same should be adopted here; but while there are national as well as individual differences in the quality of voice, we do not see how it will be possible to set up a standard for the whole of Europe. The question is not so easy of solution as that of uniformity of weights and measures: we hope, however, that the committee appointed to take it into consideration will arrive at a satisfactory conclusion.

A paper read before the Royal Society by Mr Henfrey, 'On the Anatomy of Victoria Regia,' is in remarkable contrast to a fact mentioned by Captain Page of the American navy, in his narrative of the expedition to Paraguay. The magnificent water-lily, it appears, abounds in the shallow waters of that country, and the natives, Correntinos, collect the seeds, and convert them into bread. If the quality be in proportion to the size of the flower, Victoria Regia bread should be super-excellent.

A use has been suggested for the roots of fir-trees, namely, reducing them to fibres, which may be woven into baskets and wattle-work, after the Indian manner. Of the toughness and beautiful appearance of the fibres when converted, there can be no doubt.—M. Fremy finds that the cells of the epidermis of vegetables are covered by a membrane which resembles an animal substance. It saponifies, when properly treated; but is not soluble in alcohol, as fatty substances generally are. He proposes to call it *cutine*, and says: 'Is it not remarkable to find something on the surface of a vegetable which presents the stability of a fat body, the continuity of a membrane, the tenacity of ligneous tissue, and in some sort the elasticity of caoutchouc?' By reason of these properties, cutine adopts all vegetable forms, however delicate, prevents the penetration of the oxygen of the atmosphere to the interior of the cells, and thus protects the reticular tissue from external agencies that would alter or injure it.—Despretz has made a series of experiments to determine, as he says, that chemical elements are elements, and that to consider them as decomposable is a hindrance to science. Another Frenchman answers that the question may be better stated thus—the radicals of mineral chemistry, if compounds, are so stable that no known force will decompose them. The time may, however, come when the decomposition will be easy; and a clue to the process would seem to be afforded by Mr Sorby's experiments, which shew an astonishing change in the structure and appearance of glass produced by extremes of heat and pressure.

Certain physiologists at Paris have been trying experiments with a view to prove that, by the administration of drugs to a mother to affect her milk, a weakly child may be restored to health. The experiments have been tried on cows, and by long-continued doses, an effect has been produced, which hitherto has been thought beyond the reach of medicine.—Certain chemists are still at work on experiments for the discovery of a compound that shall resemble the pancreatic secretion. This secretion, as physiologists know, is highly important in the process of digestion or assimilation of food, and if some medicament could be found similar in quality, there would be at once an end to that distressing malady, indigestion. These investigations are characteristic of the progress of scientific medicine, and we heartily wish them success. If successful, we may hope that fraudulent imitators will leave them alone, for only by absolute purity of the preparation will cures be possible.—Dr Edward Smith has read papers before the Medical and Chirurgical Society, shewing that the human body is subject to cyclical changes which are not sufficiently taken into account by medical practitioners and hospital attendants who commonly pursue an unvarying mode of treatment. As regards the respiratory phenomena, he shews that they are not so energetic in summer as in winter; and that those and other changes have more to do with the progress of disease than the meteorological influences which are not unfrequently said to be implicated.

Professor Dove, of Berlin, has published a short paper on the use of the stereoscope in the detection of forgeries, whether commercial or literary. By placing the suspected document, and comparing it with a known original under the stereoscope, the difference is manifest at once, for the slightest variation of space between words or lines, the slightest difference of position in an engraving, are immediately detected. The method is applicable to drawings and engravings, to printed books and bank-notes; and honest men will rejoice in a discovery which increases the difficulty of falsification. Wheatstone's mirror-stereoscope is the one that should be used; and those who try the experiment will be surprised to see how some of the lines seem to start forward, and others to recede, according as they disagree in position.

A promising thing for the typographic art is Silbermann's universal printing-press, which, by the use of a cushion of air or water, adapts itself to all kinds of surfaces, and will even print a globe or cylinder as well as a flat surface. It is especially serviceable for large maps, as the pressure is equal on every part, and it adapts itself readily to any material, from paper or linen to glass.—In the Report on the twenty-sixth exhibition of American inventions, we find notice of praiseworthy improvements in sewing-machines, whereby they are made more efficient, and to cost less. From twenty-five to thirty dollars (five to six guineas) is now the charge for a machine that will put in 4000 stitches a minute. In the list of American patents, we notice an expanding screw, contrived to open below by means of a wedge as it enters the beam or sleeper, and is, therefore, not liable to 'draw.' Another patent appeals to cricketers, for the inventor makes his bat with a hollow blade, fills it with cork, and inserts a whalebone core down the centre of the handle. Machines for folding paper are announced which will give any number of parallel folds, and reverse for the cross fold. Paper is made from the fibre of the *Arundinaria*, which in the southern states forms such large cane-brakes. Readers of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* will perhaps be glad to hear of a contrivance for picking cotton by steam: a traction engine is brought into the plantation, and from this, flexible tubes are led and presented to the cotton pod; and a vacuum being produced in the tubes, the pod is plucked by the external pressure, and a number of rows can be picked at once. Another inventor puts forward an apparatus for killing pigs; another, an adjustable clothes-post, which can be raised or lowered at pleasure; another, a railway-station indicator, to be placed inside the carriages, and so contrived as to notify to the passengers the name of the station at which the train will stop next.

The Franklin Institute at Philadelphia have discussed Mr Prosser's method for economising steam, which saves two-thirds of the quantity of coal usually consumed, requires no air-pump, and employs a hot, and not a cold condenser; the economy consisting in the fact, that he 'reduces the temperature of the steam only so much as is necessary to bring the water under control.'—With respect to another process, it appears that we must now regard Bessemer's conversion of common pig iron into good malleable iron while in the fluid state as an accomplished fact. The iron so converted is so tough, that a bar three inches square can be doubled up under the hammer without a crack or flaw. Plates can be made of almost any dimensions; hence, fewer rivets will be necessary, and boilers and similar constructions will be stronger. Bessemer's process is now in constant operation at Sheffield, and is introduced into the ironworks of Belgium and Sweden.

An American, noticing the project for a Wedgewood testimonial, suggests that, instead of a statue, or anything of that sort, Staffordshire should set to work and produce the very best and cheapest patterns of earthenware for ordinary use—plate, cup, jug, dinner-service, &c., &c.—and send a specimen of each as 'memorial ware' to the manufacturers of pottery in all parts of the world. We think there is practical wisdom in this suggestion, and should like to see it carried out.

With so much cleverness always available in inventions, it is surprising that no one has yet invented a proper method of watering streets. We recommend the subject to the consideration of those able to deal with it; for even in London, in far-famed Regent Street, the present contractors mistake making a road muddy for laying the dust. It ought not to be impossible to subdue the dust without converting it into mire. In this particular, the metropolitan thoroughfares are a reproach to the inventive genius of the age; as is also the condition of the Thames and of the Serpentine.

A DANGEROUS EXPERIMENT.

In the report of a Matrimonial Difference recently exhibited before the Divorce Court to public admiration, the husband was shewn to have adapted *from* the stage to private life a singular method of regaining his wife's lost affections. He borrowed, from *The Love-chase*, the idea of writing *billets doux* to and from an imaginary young woman, and of leaving them in the way of his spouse, with the intention of provoking her to Jealousy, and by that roundabout method, to Love. The final result of which too ingenious contrivance was, that she obtained a separation.

However allowable and innocent these little experiments may be in themselves, we do not think their general adoption in domestic circles would be advisable. One instance only do we know wherein any method other than the straightforward has in the end succeeded. It is the case of a certain rich old lady, who, whenever one of her daughters gets 'engaged,' insists upon accompanying her and her intended upon a sort of 'experimental trip,' before the matrimonial one, to Switzerland or other foreign country. If the gentleman acquits himself with unselfishness and good temper amid all his trials of getting passports *visé'd* and of taking care of luggage, he is permitted to carry off his prize; but if he exhibit, under any circumstances, the cloven hoof, he gets his *congé* from mamma. We are bound to say this plan has proved most successful; and indeed, it is perhaps only, after all, a measure of extreme precaution, and cannot well be called by any harsher name. The police, indeed, are in the habit of trying their suspected fellow-creatures by ordeals, such as putting marked money, which they intend to be stolen, into letter-boxes, but the system is even in their case open to censure; while who that, in his youth, has been addicted to jam and averse to jalap, but would detest its introduction into our own households? Imagine a trusting lad, whose worst weakness is that of having a sweet tooth, repairing to the well-known though forbidden preserve cupboard, inserting his ingenious fingers into *all* the pots—so that the deficiency should be equally distributed, and charitably ascribed to fermentation—hovering from sweet to sweet like the busy bee, and in the seventh (or eighth, perhaps) heaven of an enjoyment that he will never feel in manhood or even adolescence; and conceive the change in that blithe boy, if the ogress, the Housekeeper, shall have mingled with her lessening stores one of the most powerful of domestic medicines! We draw a veil over that guilty woman's mental state, as over the young gentleman's physical condition.. His revenge, on the other hand, would be base, however fitting, if he should introduce into the spirit-bottle of his father's cellaret any medicinal liquid calculated to disagree with *her*. The stern moralist, approving the conduct of neither one nor the other, can only shake his head, and send for the family apothecary.

Would it be fair to Mr Younghusband himself, who is forbidden to smoke, or even to frequent the company of smokers, if his wife should leave a cigar-box in his study, and come in upon him unexpectedly at the second whiff, while he was leaning his body perhaps half out of window, to prevent the possibility of annoyance to her from the delicate perfume? Or would it be fair to Mrs —— But that is the very matter we are coming to, which, affording as it does a warning to all persons who are tempted to make dangerous experiments upon the virtue of their fellow-creatures, must by no means be dismissed in a paragraph.

Mr Younghusband, although he has been married a good deal more than once, is nevertheless—singular to say—somewhat suspicious of Women. Far from being in general an admirer of Lord Byron or his opinions, he yet agrees with that poet in ascribing a very considerable influence over the softer sex to Opportunity. 'If a woman sees a becoming bonnet that she knows she can never afford to buy, sir, and the milliner says: "It's no consequence, ma'am; I can wait for the money a little while;" she'll come home with that bonnet upon her head, or in a bandbox, to a certainty. They *can't* resist it, sir, for resistance isn't in 'em.'

Such being Mr Y.'s openly expressed opinion, one would imagine that he would be the last person to have made experiments of a tentative kind upon his own better-halves—that the attraction of the earth being settled, he would not be throwing apples into the air all day to see whether they would come down or no. Such, however, we regret to say, is the fact, and even in the case of the last, that is to say the present, Mrs Younghusband, our suspicious friend could not forbear testing her conjugal devotion. There was not, we beg to state, the very slightest ground for such a proceeding; the gentleman is a good-looking, smooth-faced personage, of peaceful appearance—being indeed a clergyman—and the lady looks up to him (he having considerably the advantage in point of years) with the affectionate reverence that is his due; they get on, in short, exceedingly well together, and he is not so addicted as so experienced a matrimonialist might be forgiven for being, to throwing at her the good-behaviour of his other wives, whenever she displeases him.

It was during their wedding-tour, and while they were journeying from Bristol northward, that the idea of the unwarrantable proceeding which we are about to relate, entered suddenly into his foolish old noddle. Most persons have heard of the Box Tunnel—the largest but one, if not the largest, of the Tartarean roads for which our railways are celebrated; the ordinary Great Western speed is lessened as its trains burrow under that long hill, and only a well-like shaft at rare intervals assures the passenger that, in spite of appearances, he has not left daylight for ever.

In the same first-class carriage with the Younghusbands, got in at Bath a young dragoon, hirsute and of a martial countenance, at sight of whom the wary Benedict—or Benedictissimus—thus soliloquised as they were about to enter the tunnel: 'Now will I prove my Angelina, that she loves me and only me, and that the attractions of even this handsome hero would be quite thrown away upon her.' So, in the darkness and the thunder of their subterranean journey, this cunning man leaned forward in his seat—so that his face would seem to come from the opposite side where sat the soldier—and on the lip of his unsuspicious consort imprinted an experimental kiss. He was back again, and wearing an unconscious countenance as they whirled beneath the shaft, when the momentary light revealed his bride—O heavens!—as quiet, composed, and innocent of anything having just occurred, as himself! Again this deceiver did it, again and again, as many kisses did he bestow upon her as there were shafts—as though they had been Cupid's shafts—and still the lady took them, and made neither sign nor scream. Mr Younghusband was almost out of his mind with jealousy, and ready to tear from his head that hair among which the fingers of Time had already been gleaning. There was but a very little darkness now remaining wherein the star of Angelina's constancy might yet display itself—the space between the last shaft and the termination of the tunnel. This precious interval he employed in counterfeiting with renewed care his military *vis-à-vis;* he fortunately possessed a very long neck; and by craning round, he even succeeded in saluting the dear girl upon the cheek that was, according to their relative positions, away from him—thereby, as he imagined, placing the identity of himself with the handsome dragoon beyond all question with her.

Conceive, therefore, Mr Younghusband's excessive dismay when his Angelina, after suffering him with much equanimity to 'graze'—as he subsequently expressed it, to Mrs Y.'s indignation—for a considerable period, very quietly kissed him again. In the whole annals of love-making, there was never probably any precedent for a swain so singularly discomfited; if she had but slapped his face, he would have thanked her from the bottom of his heart. Mr Younghusband had often had occasion to moralise, professionally, upon the vile hypocrisy of the human family; but he had never before beheld, as he thought, so tremendous an example of it as he read in his Angelina's face when it emerged from that Box Tunnel. Had she been a Sister of Charity, who had employed herself throughout the darkness in telling her beads or saying her prayers, she could not have presented to his astonished gaze a more childlike expression of feminine innocence.

He told her to let down the window, which had been closed during the passage, in so sharp a marital tone, that the dragoon looked up in chivalric pity for her, and drove Mr Y. thereby to the confines of madness; nor was it without difficulty that he repressed his indignation until that disturber of his peace had left the carriage, and himself and his abandoned helpmate were once more alone together.

'Madam,' cried he, 'that fellow kissed you as we came through the tunnel, and you know it.'

'But how do *you* know it?' asked Mrs Younghusband with a comical twinkle of her eye that would have disarmed a pacha.

'And you kissed him again,' continued he, in vain endeavouring to keep warm his jealous wrath.

'Only once,' replied Angelina laughing—'only once and away.'

It was impossible that even Mr Younghusband could hold out any longer in his unwarrantable suspicions, so he relapsed at once into confidence and the domestic affections.

'But, Angelina, my love, *do* tell me; how *did* you know it was me?'

'Know?' answered she naïvely—'why, very easily; *it's as different as possible when a person has moustaches and when a person has not!*'

Mr Younghusband, who had been upon the point of regaining tranquillity, was plunged once more into suspicions by this reply; but he has made up his mind to believe this, at all events—that nothing satisfactory is to be derived from any experiments of the dangerous character of the above.

THE VALUE OF A SONG.

A bibliopolic friend, of much experience in the profession, used to talk of writing a book under the title of *The Calamities of Publishers,* as a sort of offset against Mr Disraeli's *Calamities of Authors.* Certes, authors and publishers are two sets of people who produce no small amount of pain and misery to each other; it might be difficult to say on which side of the joint account the balance lies. One great cause of grief to the publisher would probably have been stated by our friend thus: author sells publisher a copyright for a sum of money; when the speculation turns out well, author feels cheated; when ill, nobody thinks author cheats. From this simple, but, it must be admitted, partial way of viewing the bargains of the two parties, arises a pretty general habit of regarding publishers as robbers and murderers of authors—a frame of thinking extremely apt to damage them in the making of acts of parliament.

The law of copyright seems purposely surrounded with difficulties for the publisher, in order to establish means for circumventing him. It does not very clearly appear from the various statutes on the subject, that he can have a copyright without a regular deed of assignment from the author, signed by two witnesses. Observe the effect of this. An author is constantly in want; he gets money in partial payments beforehand. At the last, he may refuse to give the deed of assignment without a further sum. Or the labours of an author may have consisted of contributions to a work;

may have been mere editorial work, a sentence added here and there; or it may have been work executed under a salary designed to cover all obligation. In these circumstances, getting assignments for everything is in a manner impossible. Yet a dishonest author—and, unfortunately, there are such persons, though it seems to be amongst the 'facts not generally known'—is under the temptation to extort or sue for further remuneration, on the plea of the want of assignment. Nor is iniquitous intention necessary to visit an unfortunate publisher with this harassment: a mistaken sense of right may come to precisely the same effect.

A case has just finished its course through the law-courts, which powerfully illustrates the wretched character of the copyright laws for the protection of the rights of publishers. An authoress sold a song for two pounds two shillings, and granted a receipt as for the copyright of it, but without giving a formal assignment. (Think of a formal deed with witnesses about such a bargain!) The publication was successful. The authoress, probably feeling, as usual, that she had been defrauded of her proper profits, assumed to herself the privilege of selling the same right of publishing to another tradesman, and felt protected by law in doing so, as there had been no assignment in the first instance. The original publisher raised an action in the Scotch courts against the second one, and the authoress came in as a defender. In July 1855, a jury decided that the receipt was a sufficient evidence of copyright. Not satisfied with this result, the defenders brought forward a bill of exceptions and motion for a new trial, and, to the great amusement of the whole 'Outer-house,' the song of the *Old Arm-chair* was once more under judgment in May 1856. The second trial ended as the first had done. The lords decided that a deed of assignment was not, in the present state of the law, required. One sagaciously pointed out that, in bankruptcy, sequestration, marriage, and succession, copyrights would undoubtedly be transferred without any such deed. How, then, could it be held as essential?

This last decision was appealed from to the House of Lords; and only the other day the case came forward in that august court, being apparently the first that was brought before Lord Chancellor Campbell. His Lordship and Lord Brougham found that the bill of exceptions had been informally drawn, and therefore could not be sustained; but they both said that, though the appeal thus failed merely on a point of form, the merits of the case were with the respondent, who clearly was the proprietor of the copyright. The judgment of the court below was affirmed with costs. Now, here was the publisher at length, after six years of litigation, allowed to be the proprietor of an article of trifling value, which he had *bonâ fide* bought and paid for; at what an expense of time, trouble, and probably money also—for costs are never wholly recovered—had he established his right! And here, too, is an authoress whom we have all reason to believe a respectable and well-intending person, led by the dubious state of the law, and probably some confused sense of having suffered injustice, into a course of litigation involving the loss of many hundreds—possibly thousands—of pounds, all about a little poetical composition, such as, we presume, is every day sold for no more than the sum in question, and all merely owing to a doubtful voice from a plurality of statutes as to something required to constitute literary property in a second owner.

The *Old Arm-chair* will probably be a memorable case in both sections of the island; but its first effect ought to be to prompt a consolidated literary property act, clearing the ground between author and publisher of much dubious matter now resting upon it.

THE DIVER.

UNDER the Sea they lie,
The deep, dark Sea;
No one comes there to pry,
No man save me.
I and the Fishes dim,
Swift, staring, strange,
In and about that swim,
Whilst the Dead change.

They that each sit and stand
In their own place,
(Clammy hand clasped in hand,
Wet face to face),
As when through Night and Snow
Struck the blind ship—
Still seems the cry to go
Past the white lip.

As I tread down the stair,
First do I see
(Round the turn, unaware)
One who knows me.
Stretched is his bloodless hand,
Fixed his glazed eye;
Though like a friend he stand,
Him know not I.

No need to ope the door;
Soon as I'm spied,
Dread creatures cross the floor,
'Thwart the roof glide;
I with my Helmet on—
That it must be
Which the foul creatures shun
'Neath the green Sea—

But o'er the Dead, that all
Seem to live still,
Fearless they climb and crawl,
Slow, at their will;
Dumb, with protruding eyes
Cast half behind,
Horn and Shell at the prize
Most to their mind.

Where twine dead Lovers' arms,
There the claw strays;
(Ill *her* corpse beauty charms
His filmy gaze!)
Where the dead Wife's caressed;
Where Mother's cheek
To that babe-mouth is pressed
Never to speak.

Once these looked shame on me,
Now I'm grown bold,
Under the deep dark Sea
Shines the red gold;
Though one kept watch by it,
I took his keys;
There did he stare and sit
While I took *these*.

O'er all that peopled ship
Lies my dim way,
What suits my mailed grip
None gives me 'nay;'
No man of those that lie
'Neath the deep sea,
Whither none comes to pry,
No man save me.

EMERITU

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FLOOD AND ITS LESSONS.

SOME circumstances of weather in this year 1859 have called up an incident of my childhood which I had entirely forgotten for at least half a century. I cannot say how old I was, but it may have been five or six, when I perceived one morning that the household was under some remarkable excitement. When I was led down from the nursery, nobody was at the breakfast-table; some were at the windows, and others were at the top of the cellar stairs. I remember being placed there, and seeing the cook rowing herself about on a piece of wood, and trying to get to the pantry for butter for breakfast. This seems to have been the first time that the cellar had been known to be flooded, judging by the innocence of the family proceedings on the occasion: but it was far from being the last; according to the certain rule, that when water has once trespassed, it will come again, till means are taken to divert it. On this first occasion, nobody seemed to doubt about the thing to be done. Men were set to bale out the water—four or five being placed near enough to pass the pails out to the yard. Nasty, muddy water it was, and very hard they worked. I remember how hot they looked.

The next thing I recall is being in a gig, sitting bodkin between my father and a friend of his, who had offered to shew us the city as it looked on that strange day. The feeling of awe and discomfort comes over me again now when the images of what we saw pass before me: the obliteration of all landmarks and boundaries near the two small rivers which flowed through the city; and the wretched appearance of whole rows of houses where the doors and lower windows were half under water, and the women and children were looking out of the upper windows, and taking in food from boats. Some men and boys were noisy and frolicsome as they pushed themselves, and one another, about on rafts or planks, or rowed hither and thither in tubs: but there were some who seemed grave enough—owners of spoiled property, no doubt. The most striking scene was from the middle of a low bridge where, as I remember, the gig stopped, and I was bidden to look up the mill-race, and down the river. The bridge, with both ends under water, stood like a useless bit of building in the midst of a lake. The brown waves threw up a yellow froth, and were as rough as the sea. It was very ugly. The horse did not like walking through the water; so, though we met a great many acquaintances in all sorts of carriages, come out to see the sight, and everybody stopped to talk with everybody else, in a sort of holiday way, I was glad to get home. There were the men still at work in a row from the yard to the cellar, and hotter than ever; and they said the water was higher than when they began; so they were sent away. Thus has that morning risen up again in my memory, after an interval of fifty years, during which I am not aware of having ever been reminded of it.

Throughout that region of the kingdom, the inundation of the low-lying parts of towns, as well as of the country, has ceased to be anything remarkable. The most careless observer, the most thoughtless skimmer of newspapers, now occasionally wonders how it is that floods are so much more frequent than they used to be. There is seldom a year now in which we do not read of disastrous inundations, by which cattle and sheep are drowned, and crops destroyed, and embankments burst, and, in newspaper language, 'a wide-spread ruin has devastated a scene of the fairest prosperity.' Then comes the raising of subscriptions for the sufferers, and estimates of the damage, and exhortations to patience under the visitations of Providence. Something ensues that we hear less about. The doctors could tell us of disease spreading from house to house, and especially of fevers cutting off the strongest men and women in the vigour of their years; and the clergy could tell of the increase of burials from every district, and every alley where the waters had stood among the foundations of the houses. Perhaps some few sensible people might be found asking whether an evil so manifestly increased by the acts of men, can be properly, or with any reverence, called a visitation of Providence. The rain comes from the clouds, they are told in reply, and the streams take the course they have held since the world began—or at least for more centuries than man can account for; what, then, can we do but bear our misfortunes as patiently as we can? We shall have something to say to this presently; but first, we must look for a moment to the circumstances of the present year.

The inequality of the supply of water in various parts of the United Kingdom seems to have been almost or quite unprecedented. The untimely frost of last November was pretty general; and so was the absence of rain during that and the succeeding month, when rain is supremely desirable for the replenishment of the springs for the next year's use. From Christmas onwards, however, different parts of the kingdom had opposite fortunes. In some southern and eastern counties, the farmers were still obliged to exert themselves to obtain water enough for their stock; while, in the northern and north-western counties, it seemed as if all the clouds in the atmosphere came up in interminable succession, to put the fortitude of men to the proof. Immediately after Christmas-day, it began to rain violently in the hill-country of the north, and it never stopped, for more than a few hours at a time, till April.

In hilly districts, where there are always ponds or lakes in the levels, and usually on the heights also, the winter is usually a varied and cheerful season. If it is a clear, frosty season, the still waters are frozen, and the skating and sliding are superb sport. Among the hills and in the corners of the valleys, the boggy places become hard, and many a height is scaled, many a fine point of view frequented, and many a range of woodland traversed, which can hardly be attempted at any other season. It is the time for the woodmen to make their gains; and the stroke of the axe, and the crash and shock of the falling tree, are echoed from the heights above or opposite. It is the season for timber-sales and contracts for the bobbin-mills' supply, so that groups of men of business go from copse to copse in the hardest weather, marking the trees, and setting labourers to work in their rear wherever they go. While this is going on, nature is doing the work needful for the soil. The frost penetrates and pulverises the soil, and prepares it for being worked for tillage. If, instead of hard frost, with its peculiar benefits, there is snow, with a milder temperature, all may go no less well. Vegetation thrives under its soft and air-conveying covering, and the time is favourable for many farming operations—preparing the ground, restoring the fences, and clearing the drains and ditches, unless the snow lies very deep. So January passes away; and in February there is the ploughing to be done in the arable parts, and bush-harrowing and manuring the pastures, while idle pleasure-seekers are discovering the swelling of the buds and the sprouting of the early weeds and flowers, and the softening of the hues and forms of the woodlands as the frosts depart, after having done their office. In March come the drying winds, which soon call for the seed to be put into the ground. Teams and men are in the fields, so that every hillside has moving figures upon it, and the jingle of the harrow is heard all along the roadside below.

Very different from this ordinary course were the opening months of the present year.* A strong west wind set in before New-year's Day, and it scarcely intermitted for three months — scarcely ceased bringing up such masses of cloud, that the wonder was how they could be supplied, seeing that none of them went over eastwards, but all apparently came down within the circuit of the mountains. The streaming of the rain against western windows became truly a weary and dreary sound; the plash from the spouts about the house was unceasing, too. When the tarns in the uplands were once filled, floods were the order of the day till the rains should stop. When the channels of the torrents were overfull, every slope became a bog, unless the soil was shallow; and then it was washed down, leaving the rock bare. In the valleys, the rising of the rivers and brooks was hourly watched by all who knew what to expect. While the current ran fast towards its outfall, and kept its channel, the rains were merely inconvenient and depressing; but they did not stop; and when the lakes rose beyond a certain mark, incalculable mischief was sure to ensue. The river could not empty out its waters, and 'backed up' the tributary brooks; the brooks 'backed up' the ditches and drains, and then, of course, came the floods. In each valley, probably, there is some stream or pond which is the exponent of the state of the waters. When its waves are seen in twilight or at dawn, or from afar, creaming and curling above its banks, the observers know their fate. Gleaming waters will soon shew through the grass of the pastures, increasing so fast, perhaps, as to cause the horses or cattle to crowd together on any hillock where they may save themselves from being cramped in the cold water. There they stand dripping, turning their sterns to the west, and drooping their heads, or trampling the ground by their restless movements till they are knee-deep in mud. Drains in the home-field burst after a time, the high-road is scoured to its foundations, and the soil lodged in the ditches. In gardens, the gravel is carried from the walks, and deposited on all the beds which are at a lower level; water stands in among the foundations of dwellings, and rises in the cellars; funerals are more dreary than ever, not only because the pastor and the mourners must stand under streaming rain, but because the water rises high in the grave. The low-lying lands are under water for days and weeks together, and now and then a wall gives way, or a well-known tree slopes from its loosened root, ready to fall before the first gust of wind. After seven or eight weeks of such weather, people's hearts may well sink; and they did sink in many a district last winter. For weeks they had not seen sun, moon, or star. By the beginning of March, the hills, for miles together, looked shiny and slimy, like the mud-banks of an unwholesome river, so that one almost expected to see the whole surface come sliding down in one great landslip, leaving the skeletons of the hills quite bare. Yellow moss would be sure to spread where the pastures should be greenest. In the poultry-yard, the draggled hens could have little hope of broods; and no chicks could live if such weather went on. Still, however, the west wind blew strong, and the floods streamed against the pane. All this while, nothing had been done to the soil; no delving and trenching in January, no ploughing and clod-crushing in February, no sowing and harrowing in March! No frost had pulverised the soil, and there was no ventilating it by labour. It could not be worked, for it was a mere mass of mud when not overflowed.

Such was last winter in the north of England. In some of the level counties more to the south, the phenomena were as like as the difference of the scene permitted. The main difference is in the character of the streams; and the painful spectacle there is of the slow swelling of the sullen waters, as if they were replenished with mud from beneath, till the soft banks give way here and there, and a few tons of earth fall into the tide. As the flood rises, the tributary streams become swollen canals, and overflow, and join their waters, till the trees, and hedges, and houses, standing above the surface, are the only sign that one is not looking abroad over a lake. These are the districts where fever lurks constantly, occasionally making a great sweep in the population of village or town. These are the districts where the clergy, the educators of children, the employers of labour, are in despair, because ineradicable vice blights all their labours. Drink and profligacy abound wherever fever, ague, and rheumatism are fixtures. It is an old and sad story, that of the use and abuse of stimulants in damp and unwholesome settlements—everywhere, from the Irrawadi to the Mississippi—and it is as true and as dismal in the heart of England as anywhere in Asia or America. Where men cannot have a sound body, they are sure to have an unsound *morale;* and if it is desired to find out the most certain home of drink, laziness, listless restlessness, and consequent profligacy, it may at once be found in a district subject to inundation. Let the surgeon and the clergyman bear witness.

'Yes,' it may be said, 'where inundation is a habitual evil, these things are no doubt true; but the present subject is the winter of 1859; and it appears that the floods were very partial last winter, and most mischievous in some places where the evil had not before been known to anything like such an extent.'

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* It will be observed that the author must have been located in the Lake District of England.

This is true. The inequality of the rain-fall in the United Kingdom last winter was very remarkable, and it is this inequality which suggests the most important lesson of the occasion. The inequality between one region and another, and between one season and another, taken in connection with the growth of the mischief on the whole, should incite us to the most careful study of the case, and inquiry what can be done.

If the main glory of science is that it enlarges and strengthens the faculties of men, its secondary glory is that it gives man power over the forces and transactions of nature. When, therefore, man finds himself injured or embarrassed by any of nature's movements, his best wisdom is to inquire of science whether she can furnish him with a remedy. 'What is the use of such an inquiry in this case?' the objector may say, recurring to the fact, that man cannot command the clouds. There is use in the inquiry, for science has actually supplied man with a remedy against the excesses of the weather. It is quite true that we know less about meteorology than about any other department of science in which we are equally interested. It is true that of all the great agencies of nature—the winds and the clouds they bring—the heat and the rain—may seem to be the most unmanageable. It is true that mankind have been trying all the expedients they could think of for thousands of years to bring rain or keep it off, and always in vain; and that the heathen priests in Central Asia succeed no better in their prayers and charms for or against rain than the British sailors in whistling for a wind; but still man may, to a considerable extent, secure himself from the damage caused both by excess and deficiency of water.

Some of my readers will here be transported in imagination to the fen-counties of England in their ancient state; and it is true that they illustrate, to a certain degree, what I am saying. There was a time when large tracts, which are now among the most fertile parts of England, were as dreary as the 'Dismal Swamp' in America is now. The inhabitants built their houses on rising grounds which were islands when the waters rose; and they scarcely knew what health was. Ague was in every house; and almost the only produce of the district was water-fowl, with a good many eels, and as many leeches as were wanted for all Great Britain. The scientific drainage of millions of acres of such a country was a great triumph of knowledge and skill; but long after it had been accomplished, water was still mischievous elsewhere. It had been seen that intrusive water from the sea, or from barred rivers, might be controlled and got rid of; but it did not for some time occur to the minds of agriculturists that water from the other place—from the sky—could also be managed for man's convenience. The chemists set about the business before the cultivators of the soil; and the engineers followed the chemists. Inquiries were made into the effect of stagnant waters upon vegetation; and then ensued a great series of disclosures, by which it appeared that land has no chance of shewing what it can do in the way of production while it is left at the mercy of all the rain that falls. The temperature of the soil is mischievously lowered by the presence of water; and when the roots of plants lodge in stagnant water, they become diseased, and can give no vigour to the stem above ground. The structure of the soil is injured by wet, which causes it to cake and exclude the air; and the roots of plants require air as much as supplies of fresh water. From such discoveries grew up the practice of agricultural drainage, which the engineers have carried into effect, after the chemists had proved its necessity. Man can now render his land pretty much what he chooses it to be. He cannot forbid the clouds to come, nor make them pass over without shedding their rain, but he can provide for the rain passing quickly through the soil of his fields, and running off, leaving it porous and friable; and he can provide for the roots of his corn and grass being fed by the rain, without being soaked and rotted by sour and stagnant moisture. This much man has done, and done well. But he has stopped in his work, and thus made it almost as mischievous in one direction as it is useful in another.

In providing for the clearance of the soil from superfluous water, it did not occur to our improvers that provision ought to be made at the same time for carrying off the increased quantity from the ditches, brooks, and rivers. The consequence has been that we hear complaints from all parts of the kingdom of the increase of inundations. In level districts, where the natural channels were before hardly adequate to their purpose, the new surplus of water after a rainy day cannot be dealt with. A sluggish river, full to the brim at the end of December, used to do very well through an ordinary winter, because January has some dry weather, and the rains of February would take some weeks to dribble through the soil, and would fall into the channel when the dry winds of March were prevalent. But the state of things is very different now. All along its banks, and far inland, the farms have a net-work of drains underground, by which as much water is brought down in three hours as used to take three weeks to reach the river. Under the bank, all along both sides till they are hidden, the outfalls may be seen pouring out their little streams; and every tributary brook and ditch discharges its contents vehemently, because it is itself overfull. The grass-lands along the banks of them, which used to give such fine hay, are now spoiled. The grass is blue in summer, and white in winter, and makes the cattle ill, like the produce of the marsh. It is overflowed when it is already too wet, and left parched when the streams shrink. The banks are sapped, and much soil is buried in the water, diminishing the area of the land, and obstructing the channel of the river. Dwellings which used to be healthy, are now the abode of rheumatism and ague, and damp is found to be creeping among the foundations and into the cellars, where not a speck of mould was ever seen while the river kept its channel. The effect is almost as disastrous in hilly districts, where the streams have more the character of torrents, and there are greater facilities for the waters running off. The difference between the old times and the present is this: formerly, the farms had scarcely anything to do with the matter, and nature managed matters in her own way. The tarns or upland ponds were getting filled during a rainy day, while the lower tributaries were carrying their waters to the rivers, and the rivers to the lakes; and by the time the tarns overflowed, the surplus below was disposed of; and thus there was a full stream for a longer time, instead of a sudden flood; but now that tillage and pasture have spread up into the hills and over them, every farm contributes its group of streams, and the floods come rushing down into the valleys all at once, and lay them under water, long before the tarns overflow. Generally speaking, no provision is made, in highland or lowland, for enlarging our main water-courses. *Arterial drainage* should have been regarded as a necessary consequence of agricultural drainage; but it has not been so, and the effect of this negligence is, that we are more troubled with floods than our forefathers ever were.

It is not only that we have neglected to improve our arterial drainage—we have allowed it to deteriorate. Where do we see any care taken of the channel of any river in England? Do we remove shoals in the stream, and clear away encroaching roots of trees, and cut off corners that grow into promontories, and mend banks that are likely to fall, and root out spreading weeds, and keep the outfall clear? Before men concerned themselves with the rivers, the rivers took good care of themselves. They scoured their own channels and deepened their own beds at need, and kept their outfalls clear; but when men made use of them, and abstracted their waters, and tampered with their course, without, at the same time, providing for their conservancy, they began to deteriorate; and now that we require them to convey away more than they can carry, they necessarily fail us, and return the surplus waters upon our hands.

This reminds me that men have done worse than neglect these natural water-courses; they have damaged them to an incalculable extent. Two centuries ago, there was a complaint that some water-mills, worth L.10 or L.12 a year, spoiled land worth L.20, or L.30, or L.40; and during these two centuries, there has been a vast increase of water-mills. A more intolerable nuisance hardly exists; and nobody would dispute this who would walk along the whole course of any one of the sluggish rivers of the midland and southern counties of England. Every few miles, there is a dam; the natural uses of the river are destroyed; it cannot convey away the drainage of the intermediate farms; it eats into the land; it poisons the villages along its banks; it fills the public-house and the church-yard: and all for what? To turn mills which would be far better worked by steam. What should be done in such a case? Our chief authorities in agricultural matters have for years been insisting that the corn-mills along our rivers must be abolished, and replaced by steam-mills, in order that the natural drainage of the country should be restored; to which we may now add, that the arterial drainage of the country must be largely extended if we are to get the mastery of the waters, and be spared the ruinous inundations which kill our citizens by thousands, and destroy property to the amount of millions. But how? Who is to begin? Beginnings have been made in various places; and great is the encouragement they yield. Six years ago, the Earls of Carlisle and Fitzwilliam, and some other proprietors in their neighbourhood who had united to rectify the Rye and Derwent drainage, effected a most beneficent work. The two streams which should have drained an extensive valley, were obstructed by some locks and six mills—of only seventy horse-power collectively—the chief stoppage being at the point where the united rivers once discharged themselves through a ravine which seemed placed for the purpose. After long consultation, the lapse of years, and the conquest of many difficulties, an act of parliament was obtained, the mills were bought up and destroyed, and steam-mills substituted; the moorland waters were carried off as they came down; the wide valley was duly drained, and broad areas of pasture which stood under water all winter were laid dry; ague and fever ceased; tillage gave more and more ample returns, and, what is more to my present purpose, floods were almost abolished. The farmers of the valley declared that they had known one single flood cost more than the entire expense of the improvements; and if the act had not limited the assessment to L.30,000, the proportion of gain would have been higher, because better arrangements could have been made for the under-drainage of the district, and the improvement of the streams within it. It is worthy of notice, however, that the proprietors along the banks, animated by the benefits they had at once received, presently contributed towards scouring and amending the channels and keeping the banks, and again towards making a cut of some miles in length, which largely increased the power and capacity of the stream, and raised the value of all the land in its neighbourhood.

Thus floods may be reduced or abolished, it is clear. Almost every winter now repeats the lesson, that we must reduce or abolish the floods, which have become one of the gravest evils of our national lot. The improvement of our *arterial drainage* in a systematic way must be a national work, demanded from government through parliament. But while creating and urging this demand, we need not wait for a grand general scheme and apparatus. The Yorkshire proprietors did not wait. Wherever the evil exists, let the inhabitants unite to do what they can in their own case. Every valley saved, every river restored, every hamlet or farmhouse made healthy, is so much good; and as for the cost, it is invariably and speedily repaid by the increased value of land and houses, and the improved security of produce. Such seasons as those of 1859 ought to stand on record as the last in which we were patient to endure evils which it was in man's power to remedy.

OUR JERUSALEM PONY.

IN TWO PORTIONS.

PORTION I.—HOW THE PROMISE WAS EXTORTED.

I AM a medical man, residing, as my wife informs her relatives in the South, 'in the neighbourhood of' Edinburgh; but in point of fact we are *in* it, the nearest villa-residences being thirty streets off at the very least. Our back-green, however, is commodious, and boasts of various fancy animals (principally rabbits) and poultry; the former of which I use for scientific experiment; the latter for my table only, although it has been hinted by the malicious that they are made to fulfil double duty. Looking out upon this pleasant expanse of wood and verdure, with its contented denizens, sleeping, or eating, or going through the various interesting processes which result from chemical or chirurgical experiment, I was wont not only to feel the monarch to whom Mr A. Selkirk compares himself in his somewhat egotistical poem, but to envy no man his ancestral acres, however wide-spreading, his deer-forests, however fully stocked. I had risen in my profession, not by standing on my own dignity, as the manner of some is, but by hard work, and, as I flattered myself, usefulness. I was not made dizzy by my elevation, since it had been gradual; and I reflected with satisfaction, that even if I should be in danger of slipping backwards, I possessed enough of balance to keep me right in that best of balances—a balance in my banker's books. When I add that, in addition to these various subjects of congratulation, on a certain evening in July last, I had a mild Havannah in my mouth, and a pair of slippers just at the extremity of my toes, it will be understood by the married portion of my male readers that I was in a disposition peculiarly adapted for subjugation by the female. Leonora, the wife of my bosom for several years, and therefore but too well aware of her opportunities in this respect, was standing behind me, running her fingers through what she considers to be my curls, and dilating pleasantly upon my professional talents and success.

'Alfy,' said she, coaxingly, after she had thus laid down the rails, as she thought, for the idea to slip dreamily into my mind, 'now you are getting on so well, my love, don't you think that you ought to buy a brougham?'

'Certainly, if you wish it, my dear,' returned I, pretending to misunderstand her, and the broad ægis of domestic economy at once placing itself between my pockets and this extravagant proposition; 'buy half-a-dozen brooms if they are necessary, by all means, sweetest; but I thought we stocked the house when I moved, at your request, from our flat into this main-door.'

This shell had such a quantity of rusty nails in it in the form of reminiscence and reminder, that I imagined it would have silenced the enemy's fire altogether; but no; that 'still small voice' which is never still—the voice of one's wife—again attacked me with that quiet persistence which is its most fatal attribute.

'I meant a carriage, love—a brough-am: a one-horse brougham would be quite enough.'

'Why not say Mr Axle's prize "drag" at once,' replied I laughing, and lighting another cigar: 'I'll send round Betsy in the morning, with my compliments, and I'll buy it of him at his own figure.'

'It would very much increase your practice,' remarked Leonora, musingly; 'there's nothing like a carriage for a medical man, you may depend upon *that;* it takes him where skill and talent, even such as yours, Alfy, would never carry him.'

'Yes, love; it sometimes takes him to prison,' remarked I, assentingly. A slight pause here took place, during which I only caught one word of my Leonora's, and even that was not intended for me; it sounded exceedingly like 'Fiddlestick.' When she recommenced, it was in a graver and less playful tone; Marshal Gyulai superseded, and Marshal Hess in command, with a new set of tactics.

'Do you know how much you spend in the course of the year in cabs, Alfred? *Nothing!* Oh, don't you tell me naughty fibs; you men never can keep any account. What do you say, dear? I can't quite catch what you are saying: *You walk!* Oh, you wicked man, you don't walk from ten to five every day, I'm sure!'

'My love,' returned I, kissing her, 'my remark was that there is such a thing as a 'bus.'

'Very well, Alfred,' observed Leonora with a sigh, and as though the discussion was closed, 'all I have to say is this; that the child's ankles are going.'

'Going!' ejaculated I, with unaffected surprise; 'and where are they going to?'

'If the child's being lame for life is a joke, Alfred—as everything seems, indeed, to be a joke to you—it's all well and good, and it doesn't signify.'

In that wonderful alembic with which married females are endowed by too bountiful Nature, Leonora distilled a couple of tears, and let them fall.

'He's got the perambulator,' observed I, with that callousness to shame which is the husband's only and very inadequate defence, the unwarranted mackintosh in which he vainly wraps himself from the watery foe; 'he can keep his ankles from going in that, Leonora, surely.'

'Betsy won't push it,' sobbed my wife; 'she said she'd see the little angel fur-fur-further first. Its only use is now to hold the umbrellas in the lobby.'

'Then we must turn over a new leaf, and get a page,' returned I, pleasantly.

'You've promised me *him* a long time,' returned the unrelenting Leonora; 'but I wouldn't trust that child to be butted about by a page—no, not for millions.'

'I don't think so large a temptation will ever be thrown in your way, my love,' remarked I, drily; 'say "thousands." But I tell you what I will do, Lenny; I'll get a Jerusalem pony for him.'

'A pony,' cried she, clapping her hands and shutting up her lachrymal ducts, as if by magic; 'oh, that'll be delicious.'

'A *Jerusalem* pony,' observed I again, with emphasis, and unwilling that an expectation should be aroused of some Arab steed; 'it will only be a Jerusalem.'

'I don't care whether it comes from Jerusalem or not,' replied she, in evident ignorance that the expression was euphuistic for a Donkey; 'I'd just as soon have it from there as from Wales or Shetland.'

'Ha,' said I; for I had nothing else to say, since I had not the heart, nor indeed the courage, to undeceive her.

'And, Alfy, darling,' observed she, as she trippingly left the room to communicate this piece of news to her offspring, 'do, please, if you possibly can, let it be a piebald.'

'Very well, my love; I will, if I possibly can,' returned I; 'but I confess I do not think it very likely.'

PORTION II.—HOW THE PROMISE WAS KEPT.

On a certain Saturday evening, some time after this conversation, I chanced to be at a small village in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, which forms a sort of watering-place to that metropolis—that is to say, which boasts of a pier, a wheel-of-fortune, a few bathing-machines, and a stud of Jerusalem ponies; and on one of those animals I set my eye and my mind.

I made inquiry concerning its merits of the proprietor, who, without giving himself an instant's breath for a comma, and far less for consideration of the facts, deposed—that it was middle-aged, steady, and well conducted, would carry a lady sideways, didn't know how to startle. Lie down? Bless you, *never.* A child might ride him a-hunting; while as for kicking——

It may have been that the philosophic beast was annoyed by so much flattery; it may have been that Fate herself interposed to save my precious infant; or it may have been a gadfly; but certain it is that at the word 'kicking,' that donkey began a *pas de deux* with his hind-legs, the duration and violence of which I never before saw equalled. 'It's only his play'—— began the hypocritical proprietor. I congealed the remainder of his sentence by a glance of incredulous scorn, and requested to see some smaller specimens; infant donkeys, who had left off milk-diet, but had not yet been taught vicious tricks. Had he any such that he could lay his hand upon his heart and recommend to the father of a young family? Had he any under a year old?

The change that came over this garrulous person upon his discovering with whom he had to deal was most remarkable; from spurious enthusiasm, he sank into downright obstinacy, while he wrangled and disputed with all the tenacity of an ancient sophist.

'Young donkeys? Of course, he had young donkeys: scores—hundreds. Under one year old? Certainly not. How could he have? Nothing was younger than *one?* How could it be?'

The low cunning which overspread the countenance of this dealer in Jerusalem ponies would have shed another halo round any member of the Old Bailey Bar.

I turned away in disgust, and should have departed donkeyless, but that a *Deus ex machinâ*—a fellow belonging to the bathing-machine—who seemed to know this man and his humour, intervened, and solved the difficulty. He explained to him, with an elaborate patience, which should earn him the lately vacated place in the College of Preceptors, that there was a smaller measure of time than a year, and that a Jerusalem pony might be any number of months old short of a twelvemonth.

I accompanied these two to the donkey emporium, purchased my young ass for ten shillings, hired a boy to lead it home by a straw-halter, and imagined the affair to be concluded. I did not, at that time, estimate the duties of the proprietor of a Jerusalem pony so highly as the privileges. In the first place, in addition to the boy that was hired for money, there were about three-and-twenty others who accompanied us out of the village, for the fun of the thing; of these, two took their posts, like a guard of honour, on either side of the creature, and encouraged him with unintelligible cries; a fourth established himself immediately in his rear, and took every opportunity of my eye being diverted from my property to twist its perfectly straight and rather attenuated tail. The rest followed in a disorderly manner at a little distance, addressing either myself or the animal—for, having the misfortune to be an Englishman, I am unacquainted with the Scotch language in its native purity—as 'the cuddy,' and taunting me with social pride in not at once getting up on the quadruped's back and riding home.

These myrmidons deserted us in the course of the journey, but only to be replaced, as we reached Edinburgh, by a much more formidable following. When myself and prize reached our residence in Paradise Row about 11 o'clock P.M., he had, in addition to his four personal attendants, who had remained faithful, a 'tail' of about one hundred people; including two policemen and three or four highly respectable persons who wanted to go the other way, but who were compelled to follow the stream and accompany *us*.

I had forgotten, when I made my purchase, that our back-green was, so to speak, down-stairs, and only approachable by the area steps and through the kitchen passage; but often during the course of my triumphal march this difficulty had presented itself to my procrastinating mind, and it had now to be solved: 'How were we to get the Jerusalem pony into his uncomatable paddock?' Dearest Leonora was gone to bed; that was the only bright side the picture at present afforded me. If her reproaches upon the animal not being a piebald had been added to my other annoyances at that moment, I verily believe that I should have given the Jerusalem pony away.

'Come,' cried the policemen, as we vainly urged the animal to descend into his future residence, 'this won't do, you know; you must move on, sir; you mustn't be obstructing the street.' 'Obstructing your grandmother,' cried I, pale with passion at the idea of the law interfering to oppress what it was intended to protect; 'is there not room in Paradise Row for this poor young creature, as well as myself? Move on, indeed! that is the very thing I want to do! A 1, take the Jerusalem pony's fore-legs; A 2, take his hind-quarters, and be very careful; and carry him down those steps.'

'Horray!' shouted the crowd, in a state of wild excitement, and delighted with my commanding air. I was never in my life in the position of a public and popular character before, but I can now well understand the feelings which prompt the demagogue. I saw the respectable inhabitants of Paradise Row regarding me from their Saturday-night windows, it is true, and I knew that I was losing my practice as a medical man; but, on the other hand, the cheering rang in my ears like a trumpet voice, and I felt that whatever happened, I was the favourite of the People.

'Take him down,' cried I, in a voice of thunder; 'you had better take him down, when I tell you.'

'Horray!' shouted the crowd; 'take him down, or down with the Peelers.'

The policemen looked at me, looked at the assembled thousands—for the street was filled by this time from end to end, and surged into the adjoining squares—looked at one another, and then proceeded to obey me without a murmur. They took up—they had never taken up such a customer before—the astonished quadruped in the manner I had suggested, and carried him safe and sound down the area steps.

While this apparently funereal procession was in progress, a gentleman stepped forward and addressed me with a very excited demeanour: 'Excuse me, sir; I have but just come, and am unacquainted with the circumstances. You are a medical man, I see; I am connected with the press, sir. What *is* the matter, sir? *What* has happened? *Who* is it, sir? Is it a lady or a gentleman, and are they dead, or only insensible?'

'He is a gentleman, and at present speechless,' returned I, hurriedly, as I accompanied the sufferer in question into the house.

Oh, the relief of mind and body when I saw that Jerusalem pony deposited safely in our back-green! the gratitude with which I overwhelmed those guardians of public safety! the recklessness of expense with which I opened bottle after bottle of superior beer for their refreshment!

I woke Leonora, to recount to her all that I had done, and had some difficulty to prevent her rushing to the window to look at the new arrival.

'I don't even know what a Jerusalem pony is,' urged she; 'I shall be lying awake, and trying to picture what unusual'——

At this juncture, her doubts were set at rest for ever by the most tremendous braying that ever issued from the mouth of jackass since the days of Balaam; it was exactly beneath our bedroom window, and sounded like a brass band composed of ophicleides out of repair.

'Why, it's only a dreadful donkey, Alfred,' cried Leonora with just indignation.

'It's forty donkeys,' cried I, penitently, and stopping my ears. Never, indeed, shall I forget that noise, which seems even now to be ringing through the chambers of memory.

We retired to rest, however—that is to say, we lay down and listened. Sometimes we would nourish a faint hope that all was over, that the Jerusalem pony would himself require the blessings of sleep, and become quiet; and sometimes the real horrors of our situation could not be dispelled by any such baseless fancy. I think the creature must have been composing a coronach or lament for his absent mother or other relatives; for after very short pauses, such as might have been given by any donkey to composition, he would burst forth with a torrent of discordant wailing of about fourteen lines in length—as far as we could judge—and ending in an Alexandrine. It was horrible from the first, and rapidly grew to be unbearable. At 2.30 A.M. I put on my dressing-gown and slippers, and taking down the rope from one of the window-curtains, I sallied forth into the back-green. Sleep had of course been banished from every other inhabitant of Paradise Row as well as from ourselves; a score of human heads regarded me from far and near, from first flat to attic, with interest and satisfaction. They believed, in their foolish and revengeful hearts, I knew, that I was about to *hang* the Jerusalem pony. I was not going to do anything of the kind.

I approached the animal, uttering sounds such as, in the mouths of his late attendants, I had observed to give him pleasure; but I might just as well have read aloud the Act for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. He turned away; he fled; he even lifted up his heel against me. Disgusted, but not dispirited by this conduct, I pursued the flying beast with persevering vigour, despite the fluttering of my lengthy garment, and the increasing coolness of my unprotected legs. I caught him; I tied up his jaws—securely, as I thought—with the curtain-rope; and retired amid murmurs of applause to my apartment, leaving him speechless and discomfited.

Better, far better would it have been had I never attempted this! The great harmonies of Nature are not to be hushed by the rude hands of Man. Scarcely had my head touched the pillow, when the bray, half-stifled, pitiful, more harassing beyond expression than before, recommenced with hideous pertinacity, and increased in volume with every note. Presently the rope gave way, and the full tide of song burst forth again from that Jerusalem pony as the pent-up waters from an ineffectual dam; while the cock, imagining, no doubt, that it was dawn, and accusing itself of over-sleeping, and permitting another creature to be the first to salute the sun, added its shrill tribute to the din.

'I'll cut that donkey's throat,' cried I, leaping out of bed, and fumbling for a razor; 'the organ is situated so low down his larynx, that nothing less will stop him.'

'Give him chloroform,' cried Leonora, sarcastically; 'you're so fond of that.'

This remark, intended to wound my professional feelings, was, as sometimes happens, the very best advice that could be given to me. I snatched up an enormous phial of that divine essence, and again rushed down to the back-green to silence the domestic enemy. This time, I conquered; in fifteen minutes —it must be confessed, after tremendous exertion—I was standing in my dressing-gown and slippers upon that prostrate Jerusalem pony like another Rarey: a victim to science, he reposed like a sleeping infant who has had enough of his bottle.

This victory, achieved in the sight of respectable though sleepless myriads, has been quite an advertisement to me. My practice is increasing, and the child's ankles are being rapidly strengthened. A breach knocked through the wall of our back-green permits the immediate cause of this prosperity to retire, after his daily labours, to a pasture at a considerable distance. Leonora is more than mollified. She has withdrawn the hasty expression once made use of, about something being no more like another thing than a horse-chesnut is like a chesnut-horse, and confesses that a Jerusalem pony is a very good pony after all. Her sole regret now is that he is not a piebald.

VIENNESE FUNERALS.

The last honours paid to departed friends on the continent are usually of a simpler nature than is customary among us, but at the same time there is evinced, for the most part, an equal degree of feeling, only in a manner less formal and less conventional. The stately black horses, the sable hearse, and coach, and nodding plumes, are not seen in Vienna; but the dead are conveyed to their last resting-place in a manner more impressive, if less ostentatious. In passing through the streets, the stranger will not see mutes, with their wands of office, guarding the door through which the dead is shortly to pass for the last time; indeed, such a fashion could not be very well adopted in a town where a single house is occupied by a number of distinct families. The common entrance or gateway is usually hung with black on the morning of the ceremony; and for some time before the hour for forming the funeral procession, the coffin is deposited under the gateway, in sight of the passers-by, the lid loose, or pushed aside, and the features of the dead exposed to view. Its transit to the cemetery is accomplished sometimes upon a sort of plain catafalque, drawn by one or more horses, but more usually by men, who, however, do not carry it upon their shoulders, as with us, but upon poles passing underneath, and supported on each side. The number of followers attending an ordinary funeral is surprising; a hundred is not an uncommon number, consisting of men, women, and children, for the most part decently dressed in black, many of them carrying lighted tapers in their hands, and all singing a melancholy hymn from books which they carry open before them. At the head of the procession walks a priest, bearing aloft a crucifix, and attended by choristers and men who clear a passage through the streets for the lengthy cavalcade. The monotonous and plaintive voices of the great crowd announce their approach long before they really pass, as they proceed at a very slow pace to the cemeteries, which are all situated beyond the walls, and generally beyond the suburbs of the city.

In singular contrast to these sober, melancholy cortèges are the military funerals, which are by no means uncommon, especially in the winter; for that rigorous season carries off many an aged officer whose rank entitles him to funeral honours such as I am about to describe. Passing through the town one day between the hours of one and two, I found, by the unusual stir in the neighbourhood of St Stefan's, that something particular was occurring. Some of the streets were closed to carriages; and passing up their quiet thoroughfares, I reached the cathedral, the immediate neighbourhood of which was lined with soldiers under arms. Every soldier wore in his hat a sprig of green—usually a fir twig—which appears to be customary whenever they are upon duty. Finding that a military funeral was about to take place, I edged my way through the crowd, and contrived to enter the cathedral, which was surrounded with soldiers—infantry and cavalry, twelve field-guns being drawn up in the Stefan's platz. I found the interior dimly lighted, the high-altar hung with black, with a gigantic white cross upon a black ground suspended over the centre, and the main aisle cleared and guarded by rows of soldiers with fixed bayonets. Presently, the great bell began to toll, and erelong could be distinguished the distant sounds of martial music, which gradually drew nearer. The great doors of the cathedral (called Riesen Thor, or giant gates) were thrown open, and the procession entered. At its head advanced a number of persons clothed in black, and bearing lighted tapers: these were followed by four musicians with trombones, who struck up a plaintive, and by no means discordant, quartette, as they crossed the threshold and were succeeded by a body of priests, clad in the funeral robes of black and gold, chanting from open books, and followed by a silver crucifix, borne aloft, and turned towards the corpse. The coffin, supported by eight soldiers, came behind, covered with a splendidly embroidered pall, on which were the coat, sword, and cocked-hat of the deceased, and also a crucifix. On either side of the coffin were soldiers bearing lighted tapers, and the escutcheons and bearings of the dead; while behind them came a heterogeneous crowd of officers, to the number of some hundreds, cavalry and infantry, in every possible variety of gorgeous uniform, with, at their head, Wilhelm the Archduke of Austria.

The burial-service now commenced, and consisted of some choral singing and chanting by the priests who stood around the coffin. It was but brief; and when the chief officiating priest ended, by sprinkling the coffin with holy-water, and waving over it the censer of incense, the solemn procession marched again up that glorious aisle, followed as before by the brilliant and frivolous crowd of officers, whose laughing and joking ill befitted the scene in which they were taking part.

Outside the church, the coffin was deposited upon a catafalque drawn by six horses; and the whole procession marched slowly away to the sound of muffled drums, and solemn funeral music. Two large bodies of infantry formed the van; after them came the catafalque, surrounded by the escutcheon-bearers, with their tapers still burning, and immediately preceded by the dead warrior's steed, covered and almost concealed by black housings, and led by a groom; while behind the coffin stalked a knight, 'clad in complete steel,' his visor down, and his sable plumes nodding as he marched with stately step, so that his ghostly appearance produced a half-shuddering impression that the disembodied warrior was following his own coffin. Then came two more bodies of infantry, then twelve field-pieces, a regiment of lancers, and finally the motley crowd of officers, all following in the train of the Archduke Wilhelm.

I quickly made my way out of the city by another gate, and met the procession on the glacis. The catafalque had disappeared, and I did not see it again; but the rest of the procession marched slowly along for some distance, and then formed. I remained near the archduke, who stood conversing with the chief officers. Presently, amid the braying of trumpets and the galloping of steeds, the first body of infantry fired a volley with such precision, that it sounded as one gun, and was almost as loudly re-echoed from the city walls. Then the second body fired; then the third, and the fourth. No sooner had the last sound died away, than the twelve field-pieces in succession bellowed forth their deafening thunder. Three times was this repeated; when twelve volleys and thirty-six cannon had been fired, the muffled drums affording a doleful interlude, and the bands playing the Austrian hymn, the crowds gradually dispersed.

The name of the dead was Peter, Count Morzin, chief of the staff of the Archduke Johann.

A Greek funeral presented a singular spectacle, and was conducted as follows: At its head marched a man bearing a large crucifix, raised aloft, and followed by six or eight boys, carrying lanterns, also elevated on poles three or four feet above their heads, and containing lighted candles. Immediately in front of the bier walked two Greek priests, habited in black vestments, bordered with a narrow edging of gold, and dotted with small plain gold crosses. One of them, an old man, with a flowing white beard, carried a censer, which he swung backwards and forwards as he walked along, and both wore the characteristic hat, resembling an ordinary beaver deprived of its brim. Next followed the corpse in a bier covered with an embroidered pall of black and gold, and surmounted by a crucifix; while on each side walked five boys, bearing enormous candles, which blazed in spite of the gusty wind of a March day; and though, now and then, one became extinguished, it was immediately re-lighted. The coffin was followed by a number of people walking two and two, each holding a small taper in his hand, which was to be lighted in the church. The whole procession moved along at a much more rapid pace than would be deemed decent in England; and all the passers-by—it being in one of the most busy thoroughfares of the town—with very rare exceptions, removed their hats as it moved along, the crucifix appearing to be the item of the procession to which the reverence was paid.

A more humble kind of funeral procession sometimes traverses the streets of Vienna; the funeral of a child of the lower class, in which the grotesque and business-like appearance of the transaction almost produced a smile. A shabby man wearing a large black cocked-hat, and carrying a little coffin tucked under his arm, as though it were a bundle of goods instead of a little piece of infantine mortality, may often be seen walking along unconcernedly enough, and followed by two or three people equally shabby and equally unconcerned as himself. No one would guess the nature of their errand, if the unmistakable form of the little 'narrow house' did not betray it; and I never felt inclined to follow one of these little business affairs to its termination.

There is a singular custom at Munich with regard to the dead, which cannot fail to strike the stranger who wanders into the cemetery, or *Friedhof*—mansion of peace, as the Germans poetically term the spot which is consecrated by the presence of the ashes of the departed. In Munich, as in most other continental cities, interment takes place much sooner after death than it does in England; in forty-eight hours, at most, after decease, the corpse is consigned to its last abode. There is one large cemetery in which are interred Christians of all denominations; and although it does not, like Père la Chaise, command extensive views of the distant city, nor is it, like that renowned burial-place, beautifully and tastefully laid out, it is nevertheless well worthy of a visit, on account of the numerous beautiful and artistic tombs with which it is embellished, and which combine the united attractions of sculpture and painting. Exquisite frescoes adorn many of these tombs, and none are more beautiful than that which surmounts the resting-place of the lamented Ludwig von Schwanthaler. But the most remarkable feature of the Munich burying-ground is this: every person, rich or poor, young or old, is removed from his residence within twelve hours after death, and deposited in chambers built for their reception, where they may be seen through plates of glass until the hour of interment arrives. There is nothing repulsive about the scene. The dead are placed, in their habits as they lived, upon inclined platforms, and decorated with flowers. There are no shrouds to call up fear—nothing corpse-like to inspire disgust; but they look as though placidly sleeping, dressed in apparel perhaps rather better than ordinary, the children especially being decked with abundance of artificial flowers. Lighted tapers add to the impressiveness of the scene; one which no stranger can view for the first time without feelings of solemnity and awe. The people of Munich, accustomed to a daily peep into this chamber of death, are of course no more affected by it than the Parisians of the Cité are by their constant visits to the disgusting Morgue. The two, however, cannot be compared; for while in the latter, sights the most revolting are a constant excitement to the lower classes of Paris, in the former, death in its least dreaded aspect renders the citizens of Munich familiar with the King of Terrors.

AUNT JANET'S DIAMONDS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—LOST!

'I AM glad you like the style of the setting, my love; it certainly is old fashioned; but the taste is very good, and the stones are particularly beautiful. Directly you become my son's wife, I shall give them up to you.

'You wonder I should like to part with them at my time of life! The truth is, for all their beauty, they afford me very little pleasure; their sparkling brilliancy recalls the saddest events of my life. It wants half an hour to dinner. I shall just have time to tell you the story.

'These diamonds were a gift from my Aunt Janet, my mother's sister. I was left an orphan at an early age, and went to live with Aunt Janet. She had a very pleasant house on Clapham Common, with a large garden; and she possessed an excellent income, arising from various sources. Aunt Janet was a widow, and her property had been left her by her husband in her sole control. She had no children, and she brought me up as her daughter: not that I was by any means spoiled; in truth, I was by no means as great a favourite as a little cousin of mine, Josiah Wilson, a child of my own age, who used to come and stay occasionally with us. On the plea of little Josiah being a visitor, I was always forced to give way to his whims and fancies, and let him be first in everything. Even at that early age, I am sorry to say, I began to dislike my cousin; and my dislike was increased to positive hatred by his being constantly held up to me as a pattern-child. I believe that Josiah was naturally better behaved than I was; but even at that early age, I could perceive that he was particularly sly, and always took care to put on his best behaviour in my aunt's presence. I can recollect, too, I was constantly punished for his faults: he used stoutly to deny everything; it was useless for me to speak; he was always believed, and I received the punishment.

'When my aunt purchased these diamonds, Josiah and myself were taken as a great treat to the shop—a very old-established jeweller's in town. I was too young at the time to know anything about the value of diamonds, but I perfectly recollect seeing the man in the shop shew this very set to my aunt for her approval. After some demur at the price, she gave a cheque for the money, and took the diamonds home with her in the carriage.

'It happened on that day my aunt was in excellent humour with me; and while Josiah and myself were playing in her dressing-room, she called me to her, and put the diamond necklace on my neck, in order, as she said, to see how it looked on another person. I was delighted at the glitter, and ran off to survey myself in the glass. My aunt promised me, in reply to my expressions of admiration, that if I grew up a good girl, those diamonds one day would be mine. Thereupon, Josiah began to cry furiously; and he declared, with childish vehemence, that he *would* have the diamonds.

'I suppose this early recollection would never have come to mind, but for its connection with subsequent events.

'As we grew older, Josiah was sent to school, and we only met during his holidays. At these periods, he was always spoiled by my aunt, and his chief amusement was plaguing and teasing me: any appeal to my aunt was useless, for she always took his part. When Josiah's education was finished, he was placed in a stock-broker's office to learn the business; and to my dismay, it was arranged that he should reside with us.

'However, matters did not turn out so unpleasantly as I had anticipated. Josiah, whenever we were thrown together, was civil and courteous; and though I could never tolerate his sly manner, and the false way in which he always treated my aunt, yet we contrived, on the whole, to live harmoniously together.

'At last, Josiah came of age. I recollect how surprised I was, on the morning of that day, when he presented me, in the presence of my aunt, with a very handsome bracelet. As he was my cousin, and as we had been so much together, I never dreamed for a moment that there could be any significance in the gift, and I saw from my aunt's manner that she would have been hurt had I refused it. My aunt gave a grand party in honour of the birthday, and I was still more surprised to find that all Josiah's attentions were paid to me, although there were several very pretty girls present, who, I knew, would have been nothing loath to receive the addresses of Mrs Wilson's favourite nephew.

'This most unexpected conduct greatly embarrassed me; independently of my positive dislike for Josiah Wilson, my feelings were already set in a particular direction. I was dreadfully distressed lest Mr Huntly should fancy that I was gratified by my cousin's attention; and then I found that my aunt had been whispering here and there mysteriously that my new bracelet was Josiah's present. I would have given anything to tear it from my arm, and strove as much as possible to bury it in my dress.

'The truth came out next morning. After I had read to my aunt, as was our custom, the lessons for the day, she spoke to me in a serious tone. She felt she was growing old, she said: in the event of her death, I should be left without a protector; it was the dearest wish of her heart to see me Josiah's wife.

I trembled at her words, for I knew, with all her kindness, that my aunt was of a very determined disposition, that she could never bear to be thwarted.

'I replied that Josiah's conduct had never led me to suppose that he regarded me other than in the light of a sister. "Ay," replied my aunt, "I have talked the matter over with your cousin, and he confessed that he has liked you very much for years past, but that your manner towards him has always checked any demonstration of his true feelings: I then told him," continued my aunt, "that it was for him to take the initiative in a courtship."

'I was sick at heart, and escaped, as soon as possible, from the room, on some housekeeping excuse. I understood the matter clearly enough: Josiah saw how deeply my aunt had set her heart on our marriage, and he had resolved, for his own interest, not to be the person to thwart her.

'My persecution began from that day. I was to be taught to like Josiah Wilson. My aunt devised all sorts of plans for forcing us together: he used constantly to bring me home presents from the city, jewellery, bouquets, and the like, which I was forced to accept. My aunt frequently told her friends that we were very much attached to one another, and that she supposed, one day or other, we should ask her consent to our union. My greatest distress was to see how piqued and angry Edward, Mr Huntly, was at the attentions I received from my cousin; he evidently thought I was on the point of being engaged. My lips were sealed; it was impossible for me to give him any indication of my real feelings. Josiah was always at my side, paying me the most assiduous court.

'After a short time, Josiah made me an offer, and I refused him without hesitation. I was certainly astonished by the warmth with which he pressed his suit, for I had fancied he was only acting out of compliance with my aunt's wishes. He begged and prayed that I would not pronounce an ultimate decision: he had perhaps been rather premature in his declaration; he only asked further time to prove the sincerity of his love. He would take no refusal; and we parted.

'As might be imagined, my aunt was very angry at my conduct: she expostulated earnestly with me; and in order to shew how deeply she had the matter at heart, she detailed to me the plans she had formed for our future mode of life. We were to live with her; at her death, she would bequeath us all her property; and on the day of our engagement, she intended to present us each with five thousand pounds.

'I was placed in a most delicate position: I was wholly dependent on my aunt; I had not a single relation in the world who could help me; Mr Huntly, as was natural under the circumstances, had ceased to pay me any attention.

'Things took the course I feared: my aunt finding that her arguments in Josiah's favour were unavailing, had recourse to threats; she reminded me that the disobedience was wholly on my side; she declared that it would be the worse for me if I persisted in my refusal; and she concluded a very painful conversation by desiring me to give her my final decision after the dinner-party to which we were going on the following evening: in the meanwhile, I was to think over the matter well.

'When she had ceased speaking, my aunt recollected she had left the book she was reading in the summer-house, near the end of the garden: she was about to ring for the servant to fetch it; I said I would go instead of her. It was a lovely summer night, and the cool air was very refreshing after the excitement I had gone through.

'I found the book in the summer-house, but I did not return immediately, the intense calm of night was so delightful. I was in a strange condition, half musing, half crying, when I heard voices behind the summer-house. I felt frightened, and drew back into the shade. Listening very intently, I could distinguish my cousin's voice, then another voice—a woman's—my aunt's maid, Lucy! To my utter amazement, I heard him ask the girl to meet him at that spot on the following evening, after we returned home from the party. It was my cousin's voice—I was certain of that. They passed away. This was the excellent man my aunt wanted me to marry! I was quite overcome with anger and indignation. I would denounce his conduct at once! When I had sufficiently recovered myself, I hurried back to the house; my aunt was not in the drawing-room; I had time for reflection. How did matters stand? Why, only my word against his! Of course, the girl would deny everything: his word from childhood had always been preferred to mine; my aunt, at most, would believe I had mistaken the voice.

'I resolved to hold my peace till the following evening. What a night and day of agitation I passed! Not one word did my aunt say about Josiah during the next day, but her manner was all kindness towards me.

'The dinner-party was to be a very grand affair; and my aunt, as was usual on such occasions, wore her diamonds.

'You may imagine how little I enjoyed myself seated next my cousin. Mrs Huntly, Edward's mother, was at the party, and I could see she watched us very intently.

'It happened after dinner, before the gentlemen came up, that Mrs Huntly and myself were left alone together in one of the drawing-rooms. She addressed me, and laughingly said she supposed she would soon have the pleasure of congratulating me on my engagement with my cousin. I longed to speak out to her, to tell her how I disliked my cousin, and loved her son, but I dared not. I strove to say something; my tongue was powerless; I burst into a flood of tears. Fortunately, I recovered myself before my aunt caught sight of me.

'We left the party at about eleven o'clock. As soon as we got home, my aunt bade Josiah good-night, retired to her dressing-room, and sent for her maid. When my aunt wore her diamonds, it was the custom for me to take them from her dressing-room, and put them away, and they were kept in a room opening into the dressing-room, which was used as a boudoir. In this room was a large fire-proof safe, which on the outside had the appearance of an ordinary chiffonnière. I was in such a state of nervous agitation when I entered my aunt's room to obtain the diamonds, that at moments I seemed to lose my head. Lucy was assisting my aunt to undress; the diamonds lay on the dressing-table; I placed them in their box, and took them out of the room without saying a word. To my dismay, I found Josiah in the boudoir. There was always some difficulty about the lock of the safe, which was very elaborate: he took the keys out of my hand, and opened the door for me, and almost before I had placed the diamonds in their usual place, he renewed his hateful offer. It was on my lips to tell him that I knew of his baseness: luckily, as events will shew, I restrained myself; but I did solemnly declare that, come what might, I would never be his wife. He tried to frighten me with my aunt's displeasure. In the midst of our discussion, in came Lucy from the dressing-room with a message that her mistress wished to see me immediately.

'It was a relief, at all costs, to be out of Josiah's presence.

'My aunt was sitting in her easy-chair, wrapped in her dressing-gown. Her manner was all kindness towards me—she made me sit close by her. To my surprise, she did not say one word about the marriage; she began talking, accidentally as it were, about the alterations she intended to make in the house; she asked my opinion of her different plans. I replied incoherently enough, I'm sure, but she took no notice of my manner.

'As we lived in the neighbourhood of London, it was Josiah's custom very frequently to discharge a pistol out of his bedroom window. Hearing the report, recalled to my mind that I had left the keys of the safe with him. My aunt kept these keys in a secret place in her room, and was always very careful to see that they were safely deposited before she went to bed. I was puzzling my head how to get these keys from Josiah, for I had not the courage to go for them myself, when there came a tap at the door, and Lucy brought in the keys, saying that Mr Josiah had told her to give them to my aunt.

'The conversation about the improvements was resumed, and I soon found that all this had really reference to our marriage—my aunt choosing to assume, by implication, that I had consented to the match.

'It was a warm sultry night, and, on pretence of wanting air, I went to the window. How my heart beat! Looking out, I could just perceive, in the breaks of light on the path, a figure hurrying down the garden; I strained my sight hard to be assured of the fact. The time had come to tell my aunt of my cousin's conduct.

'I turned abruptly from the window, and threw myself at her feet. "Aunt, I cannot marry my cousin!" At that moment, to my utter astonishment and dismay, there was a knock outside the door: it was Josiah; he had come to ask whether Lucy had delivered the keys.

'My aunt answered Josiah's question, and he went away; then turning to me, she asked, in a severe voice, what I had to say.

'I knew it was in vain for me to speak without proof. I was silent through painful helplessness. My aunt waiting a while for me to speak, sternly declared I had wilfully thrown away my best chance in life; henceforth she should never recur to the subject, and she bade me good-night. I reminded her that this was my first act of disobedience to her wishes; I declared I would never marry without her consent. It was all in vain: notwithstanding my tears and protestations, I could not move her to forgiveness.

'But however great my distress of mind, it was for the time lost in bewilderment at Josiah's conduct. It could not have been more than five minutes after he had inquired about the keys, that he hurried into my aunt's dressing-room, without so much as knocking at the door, and told us, in going the rounds of the house, he had found one of the dining-room windows, which opened on the garden, unbarred, and the window open. He was certain there was some collusion with people outside; thieves might even now be secreted in the house. He rang the alarm-bell which was connected with the room. His manner seemed so perfectly natural, that I began to believe I must have mistaken the voice. The women-servants, dreadfully frightened, came huddling into the room, all but Lucy! Where was Lucy? Nobody knew; she was not up stairs. Josiah and the two men were to search the house. The butler declared he had himself shut and barred the dining-room windows. Presently, we heard voices outside in the garden, and Josiah came back to my aunt's room, laughing; he said it was all a false alarm. The butler and footman had pounced upon Lucy just as she was coming in at the window. The wretched girl was hurried into my aunt's presence, and cross-questioned, Josiah standing by quite unconcerned. What had she been doing? she was so scared and frightened. All we could gain from her was, she had gone to meet her sweetheart.

'My aunt gave her warning on the spot, and declared she should leave the house next day.

'I was far too excited to sleep that night. Josiah's voice!—was it Josiah's voice? I could think of nothing else.

'Early in the morning, Lucy came into my room, crying bitterly. She begged and prayed I would intercede for her with my aunt.

"Tell me, Lucy, whom did you really go to meet?"

"Why, miss, only my young man," she replied.

"What an hour to choose, Lucy!"

"Yes, miss; but he's at work in London all day long."

'I was determined to solve the mystery about Josiah.

"Listen to me, Lucy." I watched her closely as I spoke. "The night before last, about half-past ten, I went to fetch a book from the summer-house." She blushed scarlet at my words. "I heard the meeting between you and that man arranged! I knew your voice, Lucy, and I knew his voice too!"

'She turned deadly pale, and sank to the floor.

"Oh, miss," she said, in a low tone, "you never can forgive me. It was very, very wrong; but if you knew all, you would pity me. Mr Josiah promised to get my brother let off being a soldier—he did indeed! Mother's broken-hearted about poor James."

'I knew it was true that Lucy's brother had enlisted.

"Have you any proof to give of Mr Josiah's promise?" I asked.

"Only my word; but that's worth nothing now," she replied, in accents of despair. "I've told one lie; nobody will believe me."

'The girl's confession, which was so greatly to her detriment, left no doubt in my mind respecting my cousin; but the motive for his extraordinary conduct was still hidden in mystery. I cautioned the girl not to say a word about the affair with Mr Josiah, which, unsupported as it was by any sufficient evidence, would only render her case worse with my aunt.

'My aunt, of her own accord, after very serious admonition, awarded to Lucy the grace of a month's warning.

'Never again did my aunt allude to my marriage with Josiah; but she treated me with the utmost coldness and distance.

'It appeared that Mrs Huntly had perfectly comprehended the reason of my silence and tears, when she addressed me at the dinner. In a few days, I received a letter from her son, making me an offer.

'Rejoiced as I was at this evidence of Mr Huntly's love, I could have given anything that his avowal should have been postponed till my aunt had become more reconciled to my rejection of Josiah.

'I placed the letter in my aunt's hand, telling her that I held myself fully bound by my promise not to marry without her consent. She read the letter without making any remark on the contents, told me to acknowledge its receipt, and say that the subject should be fully answered in a few days. I little imagined the reply that letter was destined to receive.

'One morning, about ten days after the dinner-party, I was summoned to my aunt's room: of course I believed she wished to see me respecting Mr Huntly's offer. When I entered the room, I could see she was much agitated; she motioned me to shut the door.

"Where did you put the diamonds on the night of the dinner?" she inquired.

"In their usual place, at the top of the drawer," I replied.

"Find them, then!"

'I knelt down, and looked into the safe; the diamonds were not in their place. I felt dreadfully alarmed; it was my fault, for letting the keys go out of my hands. I pulled out all the contents of the safe, parchments, legal documents, dusty bundles of letters, bills, plate—the diamonds were gone!

"I have had the keys in my possession from the time Lucy brought them to me the night of the dinner; I can swear to it!" exclaimed my aunt. "Why, that was the night the girl was found in the garden."

"You don't suspect Lucy, aunt?"

"I do!" she replied with decision.

'I protested it was impossible Lucy could have been guilty of such a crime.

"Well," rejoined my aunt, "we women are not fit judges in such a matter. I'll send for Mr Chapman."

'This gentleman was a solicitor, and had always been a great friend and chief adviser to my aunt.

'A messenger was despatched to Mr Chapman, and the coachman sent, post haste, to fetch Josiah home from the city.

'In about two hours, Mr Chapman was with us. My aunt related to him the occurrences of that night, calling upon me to supply the particulars in which I was concerned.

'He desired that Lucy should be sent for. I would have willingly escaped from the room, but my aunt ordered me to remain.

'Mr Chapman placed his chair so that the light from the window fell full on Lucy's face as she stood before him.

'I was in a perfect agony; I knew the girl was innocent. There was a sickening presentiment weighing in my mind, strive against it as I would, that Josiah was involved in the affair.

'Mr Chapman stated to Lucy, that in consequence of something which had just transpired, it was necessary for him to know the name of the person she had gone into the garden to see.

'The girl looked anxiously at me; I averted my eyes, but I felt my face burn beneath her gaze.

'She said it was her lover!

"His name?" demanded Mr Chapman.

'She refused to give any name, and though he pressed her on the point, she remained obstinately silent.

"Now, Lucy," said he, "this is how matters stand: your mistress's diamonds were placed in that press; the keys were last in your possession: the diamonds are gone."

"Gone!" exclaimed the girl in terror. "Not me, sir; you don't suspect me?"

'Mr Chapman made no reply. Lucy turned from him to my aunt, and vehemently protested her innocence.

"It is in your own power, Lucy," said Mr Chapman, "to clear yourself from suspicion by telling us the name of your lover."

'In sheer desperation, the girl uttered some name. Mr Chapman noted it down.

"Now, the address. Mind, I shall send a person instantly to verify what you say."

'She stammered, prevaricated, and threw herself in an agony of grief on the floor.

'Mr Chapman told my aunt that a constable had better be sent for.

'At this juncture, Josiah entered the room; he was not himself—I could see that: he peered anxiously round.

'To my amazement, Lucy started up. "I will tell you who this man is, sir," she exclaimed to Mr Chapman. "There he is;" and pointing to Josiah, she looked him steadfastly in the face.

"The girl's mad," said Josiah with affected coolness.

"This is a sheer loss of time," said Mr Chapman; "we had better send her off."

"I'm not mad," cried the girl. "He knows he asked me to meet him in the garden; he promised to get off my poor brother, if I would."

'I saw Josiah wince at her words.

"It's a base lie," interposed my aunt. "Mr Josiah never went into the garden the night you were found there."

"Wretched creature, this falsehood won't serve you," exclaimed Mr Chapman indignantly.

"But I've a witness," she retorted boldly. "We were overheard the night before."

I saw Josiah grow pale. "Really, aunt," said he, "you won't believe this nonsense."

"Of course not," replied my aunt; then turning to the girl, she told her to produce her witness.

'Lucy flew up to me, and with determined energy drew me into the middle of the room. "Speak for me," she exclaimed.

'It was a terrible moment; to speak, was to criminate Josiah.

"You must speak," said the girl fiercely; "if you don't, it will be on your conscience to your dying day."

'I shall never forget the terrible ordeal of questioning and cross-questioning I underwent. Lucy, now that the truth was out, had grown quite reckless and defiant, and she positively forced the words out of my mouth. My aunt, on the other hand, was strangely calm and composed, and seized with eagerness on every weak point in my narrative. I had stated that I had heard Josiah ask the girl to meet him. "Had I seen Josiah?" inquired my aunt; "that was the great point."

"No, I had certainly not seen him."

"Then I might, after all, have mistaken the voice."

'I was ready enough to confess that I might have done so.

"But how had Lucy discovered my knowledge of the affair?"

'I related my conversation with the girl on the following morning.

"It seems to me only to amount to this," said my aunt: "you have been all along prejudiced against your cousin. In the first place, you fancied you heard his voice; instead of openly speaking to me, and having the matter cleared up, you allowed the idea to remain in your mind. This wretched girl, cleverly enough, perceives the nature of your vile suspicions; very likely, long ere this, has been the confidante in the feelings you entertain towards your cousin; so she endeavours to gain your favour by debasing his character, and at the same time, for her own advantage, she converts you into a witness in support of the most palpable lie ever invented."

'Mr Chapman fully assented to my aunt's view of the matter.

'I was in a perfect agony at the course things had taken. I denied, with truth, that I had ever spoken to Lucy about my cousin.

"No doubt," said Josiah, with a sneer, "my very charitable relation believes I have stolen these diamonds!"

"No, no, Josiah," I replied, "I know it can all be explained."

"It *shall* be explained," said he, sullenly. "I'll go to town instantly, and have the best man from Bow Street to examine into the affair."

'My aunt readily assented to this, and Josiah left the room. She then ordered Lucy to go down stairs, telling her she would be strictly watched.

'From the moment my aunt and Mr Chapman began to discredit my evidence about Josiah, the girl's boldness had ebbed away, and utter despair again took possession of her. She begged and prayed most piteously not to be sent down stairs; they might lock her up where they liked, but she dare not face the other servants.

'My aunt, without noticing me in the slightest degree, left the room with Mr Chapman. Lucy dragged herself with effort to where I was sitting.

"Oh, miss," said she, "I know you don't think me guilty. But do say so; the words would do me good; it's so terrible to bear!"

'I assured her that I fully believed her innocent.

"Ah," she continued, "I know I've got you into trouble, telling, as I did, about Mr Josiah. Any other way, they might have burnt me before I'd have told it; but to be accused of stealing those diamonds—I could not hold my tongue."

'I gave the poor girl what comfort I could, and then hurried away to my own room, for I was afraid to encounter my aunt. I heard what was going on from one of the servants, who came up to me from time to time.

'Josiah returned from London after an absence of about three hours; a Bow Street officer was to follow him immediately. From my bedroom window I saw a strange, forbidding-looking man with a slow, heavy step, come up the house-walk from the common. He was admitted into the house. I listened anxiously over the staircase to hear what was going on below. I heard them all—my aunt, Mr Chapman, and the man—go to the room where I knew Lucy was. The man's heavy tramp went pit-pat with my heart. I felt perfectly ill with suspense. Then I heard the man's footsteps going towards my aunt's boudoir, tramp, tramp, down the passage; all was silent. Presently, the footsteps returned down the passage to the room where they were all assembled. There was a sudden, loud shriek—Lucy's voice. I sank down, clinging to the banisters. I don't know what time had elapsed when one of the servants rushed up, breathless.

"Thank God! they're found!" she exclaimed.

"The diamonds?"

"Yes, miss; they were all the time in the safe."

"Impossible!" I replied. "I searched it myself;" and I hurried down stairs to learn the truth.

THE ROYAL GAME OF GOLF.

From a mere landscape point of view, I am a great admirer of golf. There is nothing half so pretty in the whole range of pastime afield as a golfing links studded with players. As for a cricket-field, which is the nearest approach to its rival, I give you my word, who am a cricketer too, that I feel quite uncomfortable there after a month's golfing. I am weighed down by a consciousness that my sphere of duty, till the close of the double innings, is limited to a space not exceeding forty yards' square; I am fully alive to the fact, that any variation, which, in a moment of forgetful hilarity, I may introduce into my fielding, will be met on the part of my ten brethren with the sternest indignation; I expect, every time the ball leaves the bat, to become the cynosure of all eyes through the kind offices of a missed catch, which, it is worthy of remark, invariably occurs when the field is wide awake and looking at the delinquent; and generally, on a cricketing ground, I feel cribbed and confined, and suffer much chafing of spirit and vexation of body. Then, reverting to the notion of landscape, I cannot see a loophole for art in the arrangement of a cricket-field. Shades of harmonious colourists! what say ye to a green expanse, never undulating for the space of a hand, upon which are stationed various pillars of salt that once were men; to the pre-Raphaelite effects of sudden blue and crimson in their broadest glare, and to a ring of unpicturesque spectators lounging on the outskirts of the game? This is about all that can be seen on a cricket-ground, and the consequence is that art packs up her pallet and brushes in despair, and turns her face towards the broad-land of the links.

I thankfully turn from the vulgar gaiety of the cricket-field to the true landscape game of golf, that lordly sport, conceived of a royal will, born in the days of the joust, of the chase of the boar, of falconry on the windy common. The game of golf, with its kin-sports, came into existence with a principality for a birthright. No two or three acres of thicket sufficed for the hunt of the boar; the heron-shawe was no garden shrubbery; and the golfing links is no cricket-field. I shall rest my case on that queen of all regal stretches of golf-land, St Andrews. The city is perched on a table-land, elevated on lofty crags from the German Ocean, which there rolls into a restless bay of waves buffeting the precipice of the town further to the west, running along the low banks of the links. Below the city, an irregular heath stretches round the bay to the mouth of the Eden, a little river which enters the ocean some two miles from St Andrews. At first glance, the links is decidedly bleak. Nothing is particularly notable, from the upland of the town, but low ridges of heath and whin (*Anglice*, gorse), which traverse the level in broken waves; patches of darker verdure and brown reminiscences of fire; whitened expanses of the sturdy rush and coarse grass, with not a single bush or tree; and here and there a gleam of gravel or yellow sand, flickering from the general neutral tint. Save a stray cottage off the course a little, in middle-distance obscurity, no prominent object arrests the eye, which sweeps over mile after mile of this aspect, till it is caught by the line of blue, which marks the whereabouts of the confederate river and ocean called Eden-mouth. Here, then, is a free, stern, but beautiful landscape, of scrimp herbage and scant colour. The sun rains some of his most brilliant rays across the far end, and defines the distance into faint yellow and green; nearer, a cloud has deadened the gray links still more into sombreness; and still closer, you will notice, coming out of the distant wilderness of undulating grass and whin, an open tract smoothly turfed which winds into the distinct foreground wilfully, now rising over hillocks, or sinking into hollows, now widening like a lawn, or contracting into a mere bypath of a few yards' width. This is the golfing course, on which the game is played. On different links, the course has all manner of arbitrary shapes: at St Andrews, that ancient ecclesiastical capital, the shape is borrowed from the old times of bishop and prior, and the course exactly resembles the symbolic crosier or pastoral crook of the Episcopus. The surface of the course is quite as independent of rule as its shape. Besides undulating in the way I have mentioned, it is diversified by little sand-pits, not very deep, which are called bunkers, and are meant to make the game more difficult by catching the ball. And this reminds me that most of the Scottish links are close to the sea-shore, as it is found that a sandy soil afford the best grass and smoothest surface for the game. Generally speaking, these links are a common good, gifted long ago for the express use of golfers by royal munificence or corporate wisdom of some kind or other; and where the right of pasturage is claimed by any private person, the servitude of golfing still remains binding on him.

The pastime has a long pedigree, but, I am sorry to say, very few family annals. Writers on the game commonly set out by remarking that the precise date of the institution of golf as a national game is not to be clearly ascertained, but that possibly it may be referred to the reign of James I. This is a very respectable antiquity; but if the question were left to my sole judgment, I would be inclined to go back another handful of centuries, on account of the similarity between golf and a number of very ancient sports which were in use amongst holiday-makers, who spoke to their caddies in the purest Latin and Greek, invoked Hercules or Phœbus when they missed a put, and hammered their cleeks and irons from the spear-heads of Carthage or Gaul. But I must hurry through many ages which were the long infancy of golf, with merely a passing glance at the *cambuta* and leather balls of Edward III.; at the complimentary severity of legislators in 1457, who were afraid that the commonalty would become better golfers than spearmen or archers; at the quaint clubs of the royalist age, when the bowyer made those of wood, and the armourer those of iron; at the interesting items in accompts of household expenditure, which touch on the requisites of the game; at royal matches in times of ruffle and periwig; and pass from the rude pastime of our ancestors to the perfect science of the present day.

Suppose we stroll along the St Andrews course? a little to the one side perhaps, in and out the whins, following the sheep-tracks, that we may escape the balls which are flying in white arcs through the air. You observe how nicely the players are grouped; no crowding, no ungraceful movement as they swing the club or follow their stroke up hill and down dale with elastic step. How faint the occasional red coat, ancient uniform of the golfing course, shews over the intermediate whins; one would scarcely have thought that scarlet could blend so well into a landscape distance. But now for the game. Here is a putting-green, a convenient centre round which to cluster some details of the game. The golfer is provided with gutta-percha balls, painted white, and a set of golf-clubs, made up of long springy handles and crooked heads loaded with lead. I am perfectly aware that it is impossible by mere description to realise a club to one who has never seen the implement, so let us get to the manner in which the game is carried on. You see on this smooth table of turf a little round hole, some six inches in diameter? Well, there are many such others dotted over the course at long intervals, varying from one hundred to four hundred yards; and, in a word, the object of the golfer is to drive his ball, by means of the aforesaid clubs, from one hole into the next, in a fewer number of strokes than his opponent, who plays a separate ball against him. The balls are not touched by the hand, and whoever gains the greater number of holes, wins the match.

'Very simple indeed?' Just the words of my good Croquet, when *he* saw golf for the first time. 'Don't think there is much of either amusement or science in it?' The very words of my friend; and, by the way, since his name has been mentioned, I must really tell you Croquet's experience of golf. He came down from London one summer to see me, and what we had to amuse us in Scotland. Of course, I was determined to make him a convert to golfing, of which he was as ignorant, poor fellow, as a Caffre. Well, it was uphill work. I paraded him over the course; got philosophical, historical, argumentative, persuasive, by turns, in discoursing on the game; followed in the wake of great matches with him, and pointed out all the beautiful shots, awaiting his responsive rapture as eagerly as a girl for an unfolding rosebud. 'Twas all in vain—Croquet did not see it, Croquet *would* not see it.

The case was getting desperate, and I began to think that my friend would end his month in the north much as he commenced it, all unconscious of the hidden delights of golf. Indeed, Croquet was quite withering in his delineations of infatuated men poking little balls into little holes with long sticks. It was thoroughly childish, said my friend, summing up all for the prosecution, and there was nothing in the game whatsoever.

'You think it's so very easy, do you?' said I, catching at that straw. 'Now, my dear fellow, just come out with me quietly, and try a shot. I don't suppose we'll ever make a golfer of you; but, at all events, you will go up to town a little more impressed than you seem to be at present on the subject.'

Croquet agreed in a languishing manner, as if the matter was of the very slightest importance, and down we went, armed each with a driver and cleek. This latter implement is an iron-headed club, used to extricate the ball from bunkers, whins, and other varieties of grief to the golfer. It was charming to notice how gingerly Croquet carried his clubs. He would not strike off from the starting-point either; no—we would modestly walk out a hole or two, and get a few hillocks between ourselves and the club-house windows. Having arrived at a conveniently solitary and secluded green, we teed our balls—that is to say, put them on little pats of sand, so as to get a good knock at them, and—— Well, I shall draw a veil over Croquet's maiden-field. I will merely say, that with his first stroke he clove the air, with his second he clove the earth, and with his third he clove the club! We returned by way of the sheep-tracks through the whins for a short-cut, Croquet smoking the calumet of resignation, and bearing some splinters tucked under his arm, and I silent on the morning's performance, but withal proud and triumphant.

Next day, Croquet eschewed my company, and was descried by various players flourishing clubs in experimental solitude in far-away nooks of the course. I thought he looked rather conscious when we met, and I was not treated to any of his customary sarcasms. On my side, I carefully cherished the budding fancy, and promised Croquet that he would soon be a crack player. My friend smiled faintly, and shook his head—both good signs.

Croquet slept above me, and night after night, I was troubled to account for certain mysterious dull sounds which nocturnally disturbed my repose. Dreams of the Cock-lane ghost harassed my anxious pillow, for I could imagine no earthly agent producing those regular knocks on the ceiling. At last, one ever-memorable morning, the mystery transpired. I was dressing in a state of calm bewilderment at the recurrence of the unaccountable beats on the ceiling, when suddenly I heard them, followed by a most tremendous crash of broken glass, somewhere in Croquet's neighbourhood. Upstairs I rushed to see what was the matter, and found—O most glorious 4th of June—my friend standing statue-like in the midst of ruin, wielding a golf-club, the while his hair was gently lifted by the sharp morning breeze which whistled cheerily through some one or two broken panes of glass. I read the whole thing at a glance. Croquet had secretly smuggled a club into his bedroom, and in the dead watches of the night, had been vigorously practising the swing over my unconscious head, converting the carpet for the nonce into grass, and thumping it well on that hypothesis. On that particular morning, a little more latitude than usual had sent the heavy club-head through the window.

From that hour, Croquet stood confessed a golfer. When the brilliant morning was yet slanting across the links, and the dew still sparkled on the whin; when the early sheep were still munching their breakfast on the course; one solitary figure wielding club and ball was to be seen marching along the links, and scattering the astonished flocks with matutinal swiping into their midst. Sad was the alarm among the fleecy cohorts, who were as unused to early golfing as the unhappy beings who were first experimented on with Minié rifles; they could not understand it at all. Throughout the long summer's day, in the multiplicity of matches and diversity of players, that Crusoe of the morning links, who, I need scarcely say, was Croquet himself, was still pre-eminently conspicuous for the grand enthusiasm visible in every movement. So, when the evening shades prevailed, or exhausted nature would not allow of another round, Croquet would betake himself to the golf-making establishment of Hugh Philp, there to chat of the game, its feats and legends, or perhaps take a quiet round or two at the short holes.

Hugh Philp! how full of bygone pleasant memories of golf-land is thy name. Thou wert the representative-man of the golfing links in thy generation. Thou didst make clubs for our fathers, and didst mend them for their sons. Not as a mere fashioner of clubs, Hugh, do I here apostrophise thee, but, as every true golfer knew thee, the quaint chronicler of the links. Who does not still remember, or has not heard of, the old man in his bifold character as a club-maker and a golfer? Could the past be re-lived, you might enter Hugh's shop with me; as it is, do so in fancy. It is not a very commodious habitation, being a small square box erected on the convenient brink of the course at the commencement of the links. Round the walls are ranged boxes filled with finished clubs for the golfer to choose from; piles of embryo handles and heads, and quantities of doubtful material yet undeveloped, strew the ground; overhead are horizontal racks of clubs belonging to some of Hugh's customers who claim a kind of prescriptive right to keep their sets in his shop; and in one corner is Hugh's own particular bench. The shop is evidently a place where golfers of all descriptions most do congregate; caddies waiting engagements, gentlemen-players smoking their pipe, chatting with Hugh, or selecting their clubs. Hugh himself is polishing and stamping his name on some club-heads. For many and many a year to come, these letters which he is branding on the clubs will serve for Hugh's best epitaph, and golfers yet to be will sigh for the 'touch of that vanished hand' which fashioned so deftly and so well. He is clad in his invariable snuff-coloured garb, and his silver-rimmed spectacles are pushed upward on his brow. His keen black eye is glittering with the fun of some golfing story he has been relating to a group of players. Hugh had plenty of these tales, and told them with a dry comicality which was irresistible. But you should have seen Hugh play a match. As a rule, he did not much care about leaving his shop to play regular matches with gentlemen-golfers, but occasionally took a round when the chances were a little in his favour. Hugh thoroughly understood both the etiquette and saving policy of the game, and never, if possible, took his match before the burn-hole, which left only one hole more to play. He could therefore, with every degree of plausibility, solace his beaten opponent with the idea, that it was a very, *very* close match—indeed, that there was no saying how the next might go. This Chesterfieldan policy has become proverbial on the golfing links, where it is considered the neatest thing in life to walk over the burn with your match settled—and no sooner.

In the gloaming of his life, Hugh's lessened vigour compelled him to leave the long game over the links, and take to the short holes. These are made close to each other, and the ball, in consequence, requires merely the impetus of a slight club-tap, called a *put*—

with the *u* sounded as in 'but.' Whoever has seen old Hugh playing a close match at the short holes, will not easily forget the keen interest he took in the game, at which scarcely any excelled him—the quiet *steal*, taken quite as a matter of course, and the placid triumph of manner when the game was brought to a fortunate conclusion. May he rest in peace!

The game of golf is a beautiful but difficult study, which is sufficiently evident from the following results. It is astonishing, for example, to reflect on the small number of strokes taken to a hole by good performers. The average length of the holes on St Andrews links is 350 yards each, and a good general score will range about five strokes to a hole. What skill and judgment must be requisite to send the whizzing ball on its distant message from the tee, to extricate it—still onwards and onwards—from the place, good or bad, where it may chance to lie; to knock it gently over the smooth and curving putting-green where the hole is pierced, and finally to hole it, in so few a number of strokes. There is something peculiarly graceful in the curve of a golf-ball in the air, when well struck. The club meets it with a little *click*, but so neatly and exactly, that the golfer's circular swing is in nowise checked, and straightway the white speck rises like a rocket to a certain height, then hangs, to all appearance, motionless in the air; then gradually falls, with a last onward bound, full 150 yards away over the course. Feats of driving have been done which appear almost incredible. Only fancy a golfer with a single sweep of his club driving a ball 380 yards! Yet this was actually accomplished many years ago, in the days of feather-balls, by M. Messieux on the St Andrews links. Another player—so tells the golfing legend—sent a ball from his club which soared upwards and onwards to a distance of 200 yards before alighting. This reminds me of an Australian golfing tradition.

Some years ago, the rains had so swollen a certain river, that the mail could not be got over the ford. A raft was the thing desirable, but no projectile could be managed to convey a rope over. Guns and arrows were tried, and found wanting. It was dreadfully provoking for expectant settlers to be kept by a paltry river from the dear ones at home—from the fond words and welcome news that lay waiting them on the opposite bank. On that emergency, golf proved a merciful and a kindly sprite. Amongst the waiting crowd was a Scotchman, who had been a keen and a good golfer in his own country, and from pure love of the game, had made his clubs emigrate with him. Till that eventful day, they had been tied up as a species of valuable lumber in a corner of his cabin. For the honour of golf, he would essay the feat with club and ball, which artillery had failed to perform. Amidst general wonder and much lack of faith, our hero solemnly teed his ball, to which was attached a long thread of twine. Then he grasped his favourite driver, one of Hugh's own nonpareils. It was all sound; not a creak of loosened glue, as he took an experimental swing over his ball, came from the stanch old play-club. Bravely done! That long cool swing never drove a finer tee-shot over Scottish links; and the white envoy specking the dark rain-cloud athwart the sky, fell safely, with a graceful curve, on the opposite bank. I have no doubt that many a golfer yet to be on Australian links yet to be formed, will often call this incident to mind, and feel prouder of the game he loves.

Caddies—men who carry the golfer's clubs for him round the course (and sometimes a set will number upwards of twelve or fourteen, though half that number is the average)—are a curious and anomalous race. I should say that the real, true-born, predestined caddie takes to the links naturally soon after birth, like a duck to the water. At the age of three or four he gains pocket-money by shewing the short hole to players not well up to their respective situations. About this time, his parents, with some faint notions of baptismal obligations, make an effort to send him to school, which fails signally; and after a mysterious absence for a day or two, he is again to be seen hanging round the club-makers' shops, or executing with a friend important matches at the short holes, for an old ball. Now commences his novitiate as a caddie, properly so called. Summer after summer passes, in which he is well employed in his vocation, with intervening winters of discontent, which he passes in a torpid state, in or about the club-makers' shops. At length, by the process of the suns, he gets to be a tried veteran caddie, and is associated in limited copartnery with one or more steady golfers, who regularly employ him. He talks of his master as 'we'—for instance, 'we lost that match,' or, 'we was playing verra bad,' and so forth, a delicate use of the pronoun which serves to distribute the opprobrium of bad play, and is therefore highly politic.

Our caddie inherits disused raiment of his master, if he be generously inclined; and the consequence occasionally is that a golfer is to be seen marching along the course, with a reduced duplicate of himself following behind, with a set of clubs tucked under its arm. Altogether, I am inclined to think that the golfing caddie is the true epicure of lower life. He is to a great extent his own master; begins his day about eleven o'clock, and has his pleasant task of walking round the links, over by the afternoon; he is always in good society, and converses familiarly with his temporary master; he is frequently asked to assist weak amateurs by playing with them, on which occasion he is quite a gentleman at large, and has a sub-caddie of his own; and altogether there is nothing to dispel the illusion that he has a very pleasant life of it, until perhaps the white and hard winter disperses the gay knots of golfers to the hearts of distant cities, and he retires unemployed and aimless to the friendly shelter of his ally, the club-maker.

BIRD-CATCHING IN PALESTINE.

In a country so abounding with game as Palestine, and, indeed, all parts of the Ottoman empire, considering that the local government finds it expedient to keep the mass of the population disarmed, a venerable old flint matchlock, and a few grains of real Dartmouth powder and shot, of all sizes, prove an invaluable possession to the peasant; whose only delicacy, in the shape of meat, depends entirely upon his own aim and skill, either as regards the victim bagged, or by the profits arising from disposing of it to casual travellers or wealthy effendis. Hence it arises that the fortunate proprietor of a musket—that any cautious man would be averse to handling—is looked up to as a Nimrod, a man of sinew and extensive courage, whose very shadow portendeth evil to ducks, drakes, fowls of the air and four-footed beasts, eatable by man, or inclined, on the other hand, to eat him.

Early spring is announced by the sweet melancholy piping of the frankolin, that delicious bird, so peculiar to Turkey, and seldom to be met with elsewhere in the world. The male bird is inviting its mate to ramble through brushwood and cornfields in search of breakfast, or throwing out notes of jealous defiance to frankolin No. 2, which, at some distance, replies in the same strain. The welcome notes of these birds are the signal for the peasant to gird up his loins and shoulder his rusty old musket: he looks carefully to the flint, and then husbanding his small stock of powder and shot, goes forth on his slaughtering mission. None of these people are what may be termed crack shots; and as to firing at a bird on the wing, the peasant that was guilty of such an act of extravagance would be set down at once as a lunatic. To make assurance doubly sure, the Arab sportsman carries with him a murderous contrivance—a large sheet painted all over with hideous eyes, and supported by a thin pole on either side; in the centre are peep-holes, through which he can observe the movements of the birds, and level his musket, taking cool and deliberate aim. To enable him to approach within a pot-shot, the peasant is sometimes obliged to make a detour of several miles, so as to avoid getting to windward of the birds, and so alarming their keen sense of scent. Once well to leeward, he places himself behind the screen, and with incomparable patience, steals silently forward to whence the notes of the male birds are most distinct. When he comes suddenly upon some plump cock bird, the surprise and terror of the frankolin are so great as to deprive it apparently of force of locomotion: it crouches down in the bush, fascinated by the hideous screen of the fowler, who now being within a yard or two of the bird, takes deliberate aim, and bags his victim. The report naturally alarms the rest of the birds; and with all long-patience, suffering from exposure to heat, hunger, and thirst, the peasant may strive in vain, until sunset precludes all hope of his bagging another. One frankolin, however, especially where there are European merchants and consuls, will repay him well for his day's labour; and besides the few piasters which may keep him from want for a week to come, he generally receives a donation of powder and shot, which sets him up in the sporting-world for ever so long. In some towns and villages, where frankolins are very abundant, there are usually one or more sportsmen kept in the pay of the European residents or effendis, who allow them about thirty piasters, or four shillings and sixpence, a month—a bewildering income for a Turkish ryot.

But the grand season for the mass of people—the time when the gun-less peasant has an equal chance with his more fortunate neighbour—is summer-time, when the quails arrive from over the sea, and literally cover the land from one extremity to the other. Then a regular battue is got up; then women and children turn out at daybreak, and, armed with a couple of napkins apiece, which are suspended from the shoulder to the wrist of either arm, form themselves into separate batches—each having a headman, who carries a large net—and disperse all over the fields. The separate parties then form themselves into wide circles, so wide as to be only just within hail of each other, and yet so numerous as, at the commencement, to have a space of only twenty yards between each other. The circle being formed, they move simultaneously towards the centre, keeping both arms stretched out, and shouting at the tòp of their voices. As they advance, the alarmed quails, which evidently mistake them for huge birds of prey, retreat from all sides to a central focus, until ultimately wearied out, and nearly frightened to death, they seek shelter in some central bush, and the villagers close in around them till the ground is literally covered with trembling birds; then the head sportsman, flinging his capacious net over them, secures a draught, if I may so call it, of fine fat quails. It is no exaggeration to say that thousands are thus procured, and the continual advent of fresh birds from seaward affords the people nearly a week's occupation and profit. Besides feasting on them themselves, they sell an enormous quantity—as many as twelve for about twopence—and thousands are kept alive until the winter, when they are plump, and fetch a good price from the cooks of European families and of Turkish effendis.

But perhaps the most singular artifice, and certainly the most lucrative method adopted by the natives, is the manner in which they capture wild ducks in the winter. However keen a sportsman may be, these birds are so timid and wild, as to be almost unapproachable. To remedy this, the peasant prepares against the winter several goodly sized gourds, which, being thoroughly scooped out, are as thoroughly dried in the sun. These gourds are sufficiently large to admit of the man inserting his head with facility into the orifice. Miserably clad, and often hungry, these poor fellows sit out by some sheet of water, on a clear, keen winter's night, watching the arrival of flights of wild ducks and other web-footed birds, always careful to keep to leeward, so that their keen senses may not be alarmed. During the day, they have waded through every portion of the water, so as to ascertain its depth; and being guaranteed on this score, they collect a quantity of brushwood, which is securely fastened round the pumpkin, so as to entirely obscure every portion of the shoulders. When they conceive that the ducks are settled down one after another, they don these pumpkin helmets, which are pierced with eyelet holes; and under the shadow of the brushwood, silently and cautiously they step into the water, and noiselessly move into the very centre of the duck fleet. The ducks look upon the approaching enemy in the light of contemptible floating weeds, and quack their defiance accordingly. Suddenly, there is a commotion amongst them, as one after another the ducks mysteriously disappear under the water with half-stifled quacks. The peasants adroitly snatch at the feet of the unconscious birds, and hauling them suddenly under water, give their necks a quiet twist, put a stop to their quackery for ever. They thus manage sometimes to secure upwards of a score of plump ducks; and the profits obtained by their sale, though often earned at the cost of much labour and exposure, and not seldom of a rheumatic fever, are all-sufficient for the humble requirements of the poorer peasants in Palestine.

LINES ON THE NEW FOUNTAIN

ERECTED BY MR GURNEY NEAR ST SEPULCHRE'S CHURCH.

Within the giant city,
For ever bright and clear,
A little stream is flowing
To comfort and to cheer.

By day and night, unending,
Still flows the quiet rill,
Calling the rich and poor alike
To stop and take their fill.

It cools the brow of labour,
And fever's parchèd tongue,
It gives new vigour to the old,
Fresh pleasure to the young.

And little children clamber
The marble ledges round,
And as they drink, stop oft to hear
The fountain's silver sound.

And loving youths and maidens
Around the basin join,
While looks and words of tenderness,
Make the cool water wine.

And old men breathe a blessing,
Who never blessed before,
On him who thus provideth
Refreshment for the poor.

Long may he reap that blessing
Of those he cheered in pain,
And may *all* drink a nobler stream,
And never thirst again. G. H. P.

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ULTIMA THULE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

FAR in the bosom of the North Sea, unvisited as yet by the wandering tourist—lying brown, and bare, and shored with frowning precipices, lashed by the ceaseless waters of a wild and tempestuous ocean—are stretched those hundred irregular and jagged islands which compose the group of the Shetlands. The Romans, when gazing on their nearest and highest mountains, from the green slopes of the Orkneys, were told, among other things, that they were named Foulă. Mistaking the word, as was not unnatural, when heard for the first time from the lips of barbarian islanders, it became *Thule* in their speech, and formed in their belief the utmost boundary of the world; which, for nearly three centuries, from its discovery by Agricola, 84 A.D., to its invasion by Theodosius, 368 A.D., neither thirst of knowledge nor of conquest were able to tempt them to approach. When, in the third century, Solinus is found writing of the now cultivated Orkneys, that 'they were devoid of human inhabitants, had no trees, bristled with coarse grass, and presented a dreary expanse of rocks and deserts,' it is not surprising that his countrymen felt little inducement to brave the terrors of the wild sea, that for nearly one hundred miles rolled between them and these cloud-capt mountains to the east. This mystery has long been cleared up. The quarry at which the eagles of Rome dared not fly, may now be reached weekly from Edinburgh, by a magnificently appointed steamer, in something like forty hours; and we propose soliciting the company of our readers in a short excursion thither, as to a region with which, in all probability, they are little acquainted; whose very existence, from its being stuck up by itself in a square corner to the west of the map of Scotland, the schoolboy is inclined to regard as a myth of fanciful geographers, for which they have not dared to assign any fixed locality; but whose scenery, traditions, and manners present to the curious traveller, wearied with the uniformity of more fertile and familiar lands, subjects of novel and striking interest.

When you awake with the bright sun streaming in at your port-hole window; when the sound of straining timbers, and the rising and falling upon pitiless and interminable waves, has at last subsided; when, after the hastiest possible toilet, you rush gladly and gratefully upon deck, and discover, from the bustle of boats and bawling of boatmen, that the perils of the voyage at length are over, the first glance on the scene gives you that feeling of novelty which amply repays the journey. These calm blue waters in which you float are the Sound of Bressay, where Her Majesty's navy might ride without crowding, and find, from its southern to its northern entrance—a distance of five miles—water deep enough for its largest vessels to swim in. Even now, in this summer morning, it has a little fleet in it. These vast leviathans, each with a white cask—the crow's nest—at its mainmast head, are whalers, returned from the Greenland fishing; and you may climb to the frail aërie, if you please, and fancy the feelings of the watch there, when looking through storm and cold from its dizzy eminence over the dreary ice-fields they have left. These jaunty war-steamers, with the tri-colour of France, Holland, and Belgium floating in the morning air, are the guardians of the innumerable fishing-boats from those countries, that spread themselves so thickly on every side that you could almost step by them to the shore. Yonder Spanish vessel—whose consort we passed wrecked half an hour ago, close by the Unicorn Rock, where the good ship of that name, belonging to Kirkaldy of Grange, met its fate, when pursuing Bothwell, the fierce husband of Mary—has come for a cargo of fish for fast-days; and that town, sweeping in semicircle round the water's edge, is Lerwick, the Shetland capital. A strange, gray, cold-looking place it is. Its narrow gables, crowned with their tall chimneys, are seen, even more conspicuously than in Kirkwall, the Orcadian metropolis, to face all to the sea, and give a bristling stickleback aspect to the whole place, which seems to say to the stranger: 'You shall never peep in at my windows; if there is contraband within, there is no reason that *you* should see it.'

Be it so; there is not much now, we know, compared to former days, when those square holes towards the water, and that little landing-stair with which every house is provided, received many a cargo that was never reported at the custom-house. But let us land. This is the main street, and the only one. What a curiosity! paved wholly with broad flags; here ten feet wide, there six; never running for twenty yards in a straight line, and turning off at the sharpest zigzags; contracting occasionally to so narrow a passage, that two bailies could not walk abreast on it; and sending up from time to time narrow lanes to the bare rocky heights above, as scouts, to ascertain for their friends below if any land-sharks were appearing. It seems constructed for the special purpose of favouring the pursuit of smugglers from impertinent revenue-officers, and is probably the only capital in Europe which can boast, from its tortuosity and narrowness, that a wheel-carriage never yet drove right through it; nor a hotel or male waiter intimated by their presence that stranger was not still a sacred title among its people, and gave the bearer of it a passport to the hospitality of every home. You need not, however, venture on the experiment. Lodgings for the traveller are found in plenty, and are inns simply under another name; where, while you may order what you please, you have the delightful feeling at the same time that your landlord has never troubled the licensing justices for any official permission to supply your wants. You drink from his own bottle, he is paid from your own purse, and the hospitable reciprocity is complete!

This bustle of landing and curiosity of looking has lulled us into forgetfulness of a fact which, after the perils of a voyage, few should be sorry to be reminded of. The peal of bells through the bright and breezeless air reminds you that ever since steamers were known here, the morning of their arrival is the holy calm of the Sabbath; and if you have formed the notion that the natives of these bare and rocky isles, so far removed from the tracks of civilisation and travel, are an ignorant and barbarous people, a glance at the hundreds who are pouring up to their parish church, from the steep lanes of the town, and onwards from the dreary moors that spread themselves towards the interior, will at once dispel the idea. How well dressed they are! What lithe, vigorous forms have the men; what delicate features the sun-browned, blue-eyed daughters, and modest matrons that attend them! There is the pure Scandinavian type before you; not the high cheek-bones and the coarse or projecting mouth of the Celt, but the sharply chiseled, intelligent features of the children of the fair-haired Sea-kings; the shrines of active inquiring minds, and softened this morning by the influence of the hallowed day, or the 'haly,' as, in the brave old Norse dialect, they still constantly term it. You have been told they are a religious people, and as you join their worship, you feel they are so. Their singing of the opening psalm has something in it, to every stranger's ear, at once of the pathos that speaks of the loneliness of a mountain land, and the devotion that tells of a pious heart; when you mark the deep silence that breathes around as their minister carries up their feelings and aspirations on the wings of prayer, and are startled by the suppressed utterance of emotion, by which their simple natures are accustomed to express either their approval or their emotion at the words he speaks, you are not surprised to learn, that while the higher class of the Lerwigians are proverbially intelligent, hospitable, and virtuous, these peasants and fishermen, who form the staple of the congregation, are as brave and sober a people as her Majesty's dominions hold; and that a lapse from female purity, as mournfully characteristic of the one sex in the agricultural districts of Scotland, as insobriety is of the other, is in Shetland almost unknown. There is fortunately on this point a high conventional standard among the islanders; a feeling of ineffable degradation incurred by a fall from virtue, similar to that which Borrow describes as prevailing among the unmarried of the female gipsies. Do not, however, imagine the maidens of Shetland to be wholly exempt from the weaknesses of female humanity. They are great lovers of dress, and inordinate bibbers of tea; that single article in the islands bringing more revenue to Her Majesty's customs than their whole land-rental put together.

Forjacus, the learned Danish historian, in his book on the affairs of the Orcades, published in Latin, towards the close of the seventeenth century, relates a somewhat picturesque story of the manner in which the Christianity, of which the Shetlanders, on the whole, are such favourable specimens, was first introduced among them. Olauf, king of Denmark, one of the heroic and dreaded sea-kings whom the Norse ballads have immortalised, having, in the year 995, encountered and taken prisoner Sigurd, Count of Hialtland, as the country was then called, offered him the alternative of baptism for himself, his son, and all his followers, or instant death, and the ravaging of his country with fire and sword. In vain the captive replied that he was ignorant of the tenets of Christianity, and had seen nothing in the lives of its adherents to make him deem it superior to other creeds; in vain he protested that never, either by force or promises, would he renounce the religion and the gods of his fathers; the king seized Guelph or Hund, his youthful son, by the hair, and brandishing his sword, crying: 'You shall see, count, that I spare none who turns away from the holy gospel,' was about to plunge it in his heart, when the father, melted by paternal tenderness, declared himself as satisfied of the truth of the new faith, as convinced of the vigour of its adherents; submitted to the initiatory baptismal rite, permitted it to be administered to his son, whose name was changed into Ludowig, and saw the warlike apostle depart to Orkney, radiant with satisfaction that Odin had lost, and the church gained, a province for ever.

So summary a process of conversion recalls that by which a proprietor in the Hebrides, in but recent times, reclaimed his tenantry from popery by driving them from altar to pulpit with a vigorously plied cane, until what they called the religion of the yellow stick had been well worked into their minds, and taken permanent root there. Nor was it less expeditious than that of the African chief who expressed his astonishment to Dr Livingstone that *that* zealous missionary should ever waste a second word upon his tribe so long as a cow-hide, to compel them to be converted, had any virtue in it. Sigurd's faith appears, however, to have been soon placed, by the arrival of pious priests, on the solid basis of conviction; and a succession of bishops—one of whom was St Magnus the martyr, who has left his name to their noblest and largest bay—kept alive the waning light that was thus kindled. Though St Magnus soon lost his head among his enemies, he left his cup to his friends; and that, says Buchanan, in whose time it was extant, was of a size to keep the feasts of the Lapithæ in remembrance; while he adds, that, as if to secure the sanction of the saint for inebriety, every newly consecrated bishop was required to empty it at a draught; the people drawing an augury, if he did so, not only of a prosperous episcopate, but of bountiful fishings and fruitful harvests. Cup and custom have now, whether happily or not, disappeared. The religion of the islands is maintained by ministers of the Established Church, and by numerous schools, planted by the heritors and by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, wherever there is a sufficient population to require them; the result being, that while those who remain in the islands give the magistrate and the policeman an almost perpetual holiday, the youth who leave them for the royal and mercantile navy and for civil life, rise, by dint of character and education, to good position, and reflect honest pride on all connected with them. Out of a population of thirty thousand, there is hardly an individual who cannot both read and write, or an adult who is not a member of a Christian church, or a reader of a weekly newspaper. At the period of the Great Revolution, which occurred in November, the event was not heard of till May in Shetland, and when reported at Lerwick by a fisherman, he was imprisoned, and nearly hanged for treason. Now, the latest intelligence is discussed with an avidity in every boat, which reminded us of a story of a late judge of the Court of Session when examining a Highland schoolmaster. 'So,' said his lordship, 'you take in a newspaper and *Chambers's Journal* in your remote parish.' 'Yes,' says the pedagogue, 'for I tell them that the human mind is just like a toddy-kettle, ye maun be aye fill-fillin at it.'

We question if there be a country in Europe where the eye of a stranger is more strikingly arrested than in a morning saunter from Lerwick. The road is studded for miles with groups of women, each with a straw-basket on her back, and each with knitting apparatus in her busy hands, chatting as she walks as busily as female tongues usually do, and ready to return, with modest frankness, the '*good-morning*' they evidently look for. These are the working bees of the community. Many of these have left their homes in the town for the distant moss, hours before cities usually awake to life, to cut fresh peats with their long iron spades or *tuskers*, and fill their baskets with those they exposed to the sun the week before —peats being the only fuel that nineteen houses in the score in Shetland can command. Others of them are country maidens, as a glance at the contents of their *cassie*, or basket, tells. From one, the necks of inquiring fowls rear themselves; from another, droops the patient head of a calf. 'How sell you the chickens, mistress?' 'The young ones' (each sufficient for a meal) 'are two shillings the dozen. This large cock you can have for fivepence; the calf for two shillings.' 'It seems very young,' we remark. 'Not so very young,' is the arch rejoinder. 'If it is spared till to-morrow, it will be two days old;' and little probability, we believe, there is of its being spared. Boiled down in its tenderest infancy, and left to cool into a jelly, it forms one of their chief dainties. But how are the busy fingers occupied? The older women as they walk are knitting the soft woollen socks that are so prized, and of which there are a few pairs to dispose of in every cottage you enter. The younger, coarse as their dress and occupation seem, have threads on their wires which emulate in delicacy the spider's web, and are working them into shawls and veils that, for elegance of pattern, and lightness of effect, appear like a web of morning gossamer woven by the fairies for Titania. That fair bevy, somewhat more highly dressed than the others, as being strangers in Lerwick, to which they are carrying their produce, have rowed this morning for miles through tides and currents, where both a strong and a skilful arm is required; and now that their hands have left the oar, they are forming shawls which will hardly weigh three ounces, and can knit stockings that have been found worthy of a king's acceptance, being fine enough to be drawn through a marriage ring. Those more homely in attire are servants, who are engaged on somewhat peculiar terms —'seven shillings in the half-year, and the use of their hands;' a phrase which intimates that much of their labour lies in tending cattle and providing peats for the fire, and that the produce of what they knit, when thus occupied, is their own. They are generally adepts in the art. These stockings of royalty we have alluded to were worked by a lady's hands; but her servant, not knowing their destination, and seeing only they were finer than usual, resolved that they should grace her own feet at a country merry-making, and discovered in the morning that she had danced a hole in them. Nothing daunted, either by the intricacy of the pattern or the gossamer fineness of the thread, she at once, with the almost instinct for knitting that distinguishes the Shetland girls, set herself to repair the rent, and with such skill, that it never could have been discovered but for her own vanity. His majesty, in acknowledging the gift, intimated that he had worn them at Holyrood; and the girl, when informed of the circumstance by her gratified mistress, electrified her by the exclamation, 'I hope, if he has torn them as I did, he'll get them as weel mended!' It is seldom, however, their work is of so delicate or so costly a description. If they receive ninepence a pair for their socks, and five-and-twenty or thirty shillings for their finest shawl, they are well satisfied as being thereby enabled to make an appearance in church on Sunday, which fills their simple bosoms with honest pride, and turns admiring lovers into happy husbands.

It certainly jars on the feelings, and proclaims a somewhat too primitive state of manners, that on the female population should, in addition to their proper and congenial duties, devolve the hardest labours of the field. To see them rowing their boats, talking and laughing the while, is picturesque; but not to find a row of them, under a hot sun, driving their sharp narrow spades into the stony soil, and flinging the upturned contents from them with an energy that bathes their embrowned foreheads in perspiration. The men aid them in the spring labour; but, even when it is most pressing, with a condescending air. Their own proper field of duty is the sea —the bounteous mother and dearest friend of the Shetlanders. Running up everywhere in creeks and sounds to the very centre almost of the mainland; embracing in its white arms every rocky and green island that dots its surface, and bringing to their very doors exhaustless shoals of every species of fish that its waters hold, from the sillock and the herring to the seal and whale, old Mother Thetis seems to have a positive fondness for her green-eyed children; while they, from placing their dwellings—whether the cottage of the peasant, the house of the pastor, or the castle of the proprietor—where the sight and sound of her waters are never absent, seem to reciprocate her affection. Nothing proves so wearisome to a Shetlander, when he first visits southern climes, as the presence of trees everywhere, and the absence of the familiar sea. Compared to its ever-changing aspect, the richest landscape is tame to him, and he ever wishes to die with its murmurs in his ear, and its cool air upon his brow. During the winter months, from November to February, when the dull daylight is of only five or six hours' duration, the sea clothes itself with a terror indeed that frowns the boldest away; breaking over precipices twenty feet above its usual height, invading dwellings that seem perched on their summits rather like watch-towers than habitations, and throwing masses of rock on the shore that the hands of the Titans could not have hurled. But in February it softens its mood. The fishing from the rock with string and crooked pins, by the women and boys, that has been sufficient to supply them with the young of the coal-fish as a relish to their barley-bread, gives way to the more serious occupation of ling-fishing. May sends them to the distant banks where the cod abounds, in sloops with from eight to ten men on board, and fifty lines in operation, which are often weighted with fish faster than the hands can disengage them. August invites them to secure the herrings that drift past them in shoals innumerable, and calls them, scarcely less regularly, to the stirring excitements of the whale-chase. Yonder, ten miles off at sea, is a noble herd, spouting and shewing their huge backs in their gambols after the herring shoal, as conscious of strength and joy. 'The tide is flowing. Magnus! Eric! we may have them! Out with the boats; warn the absent men. If this breeze lasts, we may weather them ere they get to the *roost*. Up sail, boys, and let go!'

The village in the meantime is assembled, young and old, on the cliffs, watching with eager gaze the gallant little boat as it scuds with its great square sail before the breeze. It tacks at last. They have turned the herd; and yonder are the boats of the Barra men, who have joined them, and are keeping the monsters towards the shore. Stupid creatures! Well do they merit their name of the Ca'ing or Driving whales. A herd of Cambridgeshire heifers are not more patiently driven forth from their lazy postures than they are from their depths to the shore. On they come; boats shooting from every headland, manned by men, women, and boys, appear as if summoned by magic behind them; while dissonant shouts and yells, which take away what little sense the poor brutes have remaining, ring with a demoniac exultation on every side. But, see, the great leader of the herd perceives danger. He has grazed the land, and is head to sea again. 'Try him with the harpoon! Old Andrew is at the helm! Now, Magnus, aim your best.' Hurrah! it holds. The monster feels the point, and with a horrible bellow is once more making for the shore. All is secure now; the rest follow their leader; and hemmed in, and driven on the shoal water, which is every moment receding, they splash, flounder, and moan in vain; while, armed with harpoons, spears, knives, hay-forks, peat-spades, and every available and imaginable kind of instrument, the excited multitude, up to the waist in water, from the small boy to the crippled tailor, hack and pierce the dark sides of the huge creatures till the bay is a pool of blood. A glorious day's hunt! Eighty whales are its produce, from six to twenty feet in length, and averaging in value from two to three pounds apiece. One-third goes to the owner of the land, and the remainder to the captors; but on the principle, that all shall participate in the general joy; that while the men, to whom the capture is chiefly owing, shall have the larger share, not the smallest boy or feeblest old crone that has lifted weapon or even tongue against them, shall be wholly overlooked. This is a scene of frequent occurrence in the Shetlands; and there are few fields stretching to the sea that are not strewn with the bones of the ca'ing whale.

AUNT JANET'S DIAMONDS.

CHAPTER II.

FOUND!

'My aunt, Josiah, Mr Chapman, and Lucy were in the room; the officer had been sent down stairs. "The diamonds were in the safe after all," said my aunt to me the moment I entered. "The officer, on pulling the drawer right out, found them in the space behind the back of the drawer and the safe. He says, that as the drawer was crammed full, the case must have got hitched against the cover of the drawer, and when the drawer was pulled out, the case fell behind it, and so got pushed back by the drawer."

'I could see vindictive triumph in Josiah's eyes. "And now," said my aunt, "I have got to perform an act of justice towards Lucy. She has been wrongfully accused of stealing those diamonds. Under ordinary circumstances, I should have felt that no reparation which I could make would be too great; but she met the accusation with an infamous story—a story which, no doubt, she had originally trumped up for the purpose of gaining the good-will and assistance of a person who should have been above listening to such wicked insinuations."

'My aunt's words were positive torture in my ears. "However," continued my aunt, "if Lucy will sign a paper, declaring that story utterly false, I will, on my part, buy her brother off from the army, give her a clear year's wages, and, as far as I dare in justice, not concealing what has occurred, give her such a character as may gain her a respectable place. Mr Chapman will draw out the statement."

'There was a dead silence while Mr Chapman was writing; I raised my eyes to look at Lucy. The girl was evidently so entirely unhinged by what had occurred, that she seemed quite unconscious that the matter on hand concerned her.

"Now, Lucy," said Mr Chapman briskly, "sign this."

"Read it to her first," exclaimed my aunt.

"But it is not a lie, sir, indeed," said Lucy faintly, interrupting Mr Chapman as he read.

'Mr Chapman paid no attention to her, but read on to the end.

"Now," said he, "we won't argue the question of its being a lie or not; that would be an utter loss of time, for every person of common sense must be convinced that it is. If you sign this paper, you obtain the advantages your mistress has offered; if you refuse, you leave this house a beggar, without a character. Choose;" and he offered her a pen.

"Lucy!" I cried involuntarily.

'The girl turned and looked at me with unmeaning gaze.

"Silence!" said my aunt to me in a severe tone; "don't you interfere with her."

'Mr Chapman was whispering to Lucy. From what I overheard, it was evident that he merely attributed her hesitation to an obstinate persistence in her story.

'But I could not keep silence. I had been forced to speak against Josiah upon strong conviction. I should never have felt convinced of my mistake if I thought that the girl had signed the paper from mercenary motives.

"Lucy," said I, "listen to me. The question is, was Mr Josiah with you in the garden that evening before the dinner, or not? They say it was your interest once to declare he was; it is now clearly your interest to deny it. Lay aside this wretched question of interest, and speak the truth. You will have to speak the truth one day. It is better to speak it now, though it makes you a beggar, than speak it hereafter with shame and remorse."

'I could see how agitated the girl was; pain of irresolution flushed her face: she abruptly left Mr Chapman, and came to my side.

"I won't sign it!" she exclaimed. "I did speak the truth."

'My aunt was the first to recover from the surprise which my conduct created. She rang the bell; the butler entered. "Pay that girl," said she, "a month's wages, and turn her out of the house. Mind, she leaves this house not a thief, but a liar."

'My courage had ebbed away with the words I had addressed to Lucy; I sank into a chair overwhelmed with an intense feeling of moral exhaustion; then my aunt, in the bitterest words, upbraided me for the opinion I persisted in entertaining about Josiah. She would insist upon it, notwithstanding all my assurances, that I had eagerly caught at the girl's story, in the hopes of undermining Josiah's character; but the scheme had failed—the blow had fallen on my head. She called upon Mr Chapman to witness her words: "Not one penny of her fortune should be mine; henceforth, I should work for my bread as a governess, and cease to be an inmate of her house." Suddenly recollecting herself, she drew Mr Huntly's letter from her pocket. "There," said she, "the sooner you answer that, the better. Now! this evening! go, and say you are a beggar, and see if he will care for you."

'I was very angry—indignant at her cruel challenge. I spoke at random. "I will go," said I, and I left the room. I was far too excited to think. I put on my bonnet, hurried down stairs, and shut the hall-door after me. Whither?—to Mrs Huntly's—but?—— I began to think as I turned on the door-step, and looked forth on the common: the old home-scene, so familiar, years and years I had looked out upon it from my bedroom window. The sun was beginning to set as I lingered on the door-step; the whole scene was bright and warm, but it chilled me through and through. The feeling of home was gone—I felt I was face to face with the cold hard world. Then doubt and desolation came upon me. If my aunt had been alone, I would have returned, and swallowed my words, and prayed on my knees to be taken back; but I thought of Josiah's triumph—I dare not face that; and I turned away, and left the house.

'I shall never forget the cruel doubts which beset me in that short walk to Mrs Huntly's, the sad possibilities which thronged my brain; not that I doubted of his love, but I knew he was not rich; he might have looked for something on my part to enable us to marry. At the very least, I was throwing myself on his generosity, not only accepting, but seizing eagerly at his offer, as a drowning wretch clutches at a straw. Then my circumstances were so totally changed since the offer was made, that my pride revolted at the idea of forcing him, out of honour, to take me as his wife. The idea of going to Mrs Huntly's, which, on the spur of the moment, had appeared perfectly natural and proper, began to seem nothing short of utter boldness and impudence.

'I am sure I must have given it up, and gone back humbly to my aunt's, had he—Mr Huntly—not overtaken me on the common; he only bowed, and would have passed on (he said afterwards he thought he had no right to address me till his letter was answered). I spoke his name only very low, but he caught it, and turned. I felt terribly frightened, and could scarcely speak, but this was only at first; a few words from him, and doubt was over, and he took me home to his mother.

'Mrs Huntly was very kind to me; she called me from the very first her daughter, listening with a mother's sympathy to all I had to say. I was to call their house my home; and in a very short time it really was my own home. We were married as speedily as arrangements would permit.

'I did all in my power to obtain my aunt's forgiveness, but in vain. The day after I was at Mrs Huntly's, my wardrobe, and everything I possessed, were sent to me, but no letter or message; and though I wrote very often, I received no reply. This was the only drawback to my happiness. Though Mr Huntly's income was small, it was quite sufficient for every comfort. He was so thoughtfully kind: he bought Lucy's brother out of the army; and Lucy, poor girl, Mrs Huntly took at once into her service, and she never left us till she went away to be married many years afterwards.

'I had been married three months, and I had never even chanced to meet my aunt in my walks, but I heard of her from time to time from mutual friends.

'One day, intelligence was brought me that she was seriously ill—a paralytic seizure. In the greatest anxiety, I hastened to the house; the doctor's carriage was at the door. I asked how my aunt was. The butler said she was very ill. Could I see her? The man said he had strict orders to refuse me admittance. "Whose orders?" I inquired.

"Mr Josiah's," was the reply. I was reflecting upon what I had better do, when the doctor came down stairs. He had always been a very kind friend of mine.

"I'm so glad you are here," said he; "I think it might do your aunt good; she has mentioned your name several times." He begged to have a few words with me in the dining-room.

"But I'm refused admittance."

"Mr Josiah's orders, sir," said the butler, puzzled what to do.

"I'll be responsible," replied the doctor, and I followed him into the dining-room.

'The doctor did not disguise from me that it was a most serious attack. It was agreed that I should enter my aunt's room as if nothing had occurred between us, and busy myself with the general arrangements.

'My aunt's face did brighten up when I approached her, and she smiled faintly. I was very distressed to see her in so sad a condition. I was on the point of referring to the past, and begging her forgiveness, but the doctor drew me back, and motioned to me to be silent.

'My presence and attentions seemed to cause my aunt so much satisfaction, that the doctor expressed a strong wish, if possible, that I should remain and nurse her. I could sleep on the sofa in the room. He feared that my services would not be very long required. I was so very glad to be of any comfort to my aunt, that I readily agreed to the proposition; then I recollected about Josiah, and reminded the doctor of the peculiar circumstances in which I was placed. He promised me that I should have no annoyance or anxiety on that score. I was thus fully established as chief nurse. My first meeting with Josiah was not nearly as embarrassing as I had feared; he was certainly cold and distant in his manner, but he expressed himself very pleased that my aunt should have me with her; nevertheless, I heard afterwards, that the unfortunate butler who had admitted me was peremptorily dismissed.

'At the first, when my aunt was so ill and helpless, Josiah came very little into the sick-room; but as soon as she grew better, and began thoroughly to regain her consciousness and the use of her limbs, he was in and out of the room all day. On the plea that I should be over-fatigued, he wanted me to let the nurse sleep in the room. I would not consent to this; I said, that as my aunt was so accustomed to my nursing, I knew she would never like anybody else with her. He was very reluctant to forego his proposal. The nurse slept in the boudoir, and I observed that she became far more active and attentive in the night than she had been during the worst of the illness. If I got up ever so softly to go to my aunt's bed, she was sure to be in the room; and more than that, the slightest movement always brought Josiah tapping at the door to know if we wanted anything.

'My aunt was so pleased with Josiah's attentions, she would call out as loud as she could: "Thank you, Josiah; you go to bed; it's nothing, Josiah."

'I remember wanting to send a note home; there was no ink in my aunt's inkstand, so I asked the nurse to get some. She left the room, and Josiah presently came in with his own inkstand, and placed it before me. I wrote my note, which he undertook to send, and then he carried his inkstand off with him.

'Somehow, I could never get any ink kept in my aunt's inkstand, and whenever I inquired for ink, Josiah was sure to come into the room.

'I soon discovered that every movement of mine was closely watched; but it was all done so cleverly and naturally, that I had not a word to say.

'One morning, Josiah was sitting in the room with my aunt and myself; I had been up several times in the night, and was in a sort of half-doze, when I heard my aunt address Josiah in a low tone: "She has been very good to me during my illness, giving up her time so entirely. You feel that, Josiah, don't you?"

"Yes, aunt."

"Then, Josiah, forgive her, for my sake."

"For your sake, aunt, I do forgive her."

"You hear that?" said my aunt to me—"Josiah forgives you."

"From the bottom of your heart—say so, Josiah."

"From the bottom of my heart," echoed Josiah; but I could see the scowl on his face as he spoke.

"I must do something for her," continued my aunt.

"Oh, aunt," exclaimed Josiah, starting from his seat and coming to the bedside, "haven't I been always affectionate, and attentive, and dutiful? Did I marry against your commands? Did I spurn your kindness?"

"You have been very good, Josiah—very good," replied my aunt. "I only want to do some little thing for her, because she has been so attentive during this illness."

'My pride was aroused, and but for fear of over-exciting my aunt, I should have declined any return for doing what was merely my duty.

"I can't give her any money; I've sworn not," said my aunt, addressing Josiah.

"You did swear it," he replied very deliberately; "Mr Chapman was witness."

"But there are the diamonds, Josiah."

"The diamonds!" he exclaimed, raising his voice.

"I could give the diamonds, Josiah."

"What! your own diamonds, aunt," said he, "which you have always worn?"

"They're not money, Josiah."

"But she married out of the family. Your diamonds go to strangers?"

'I could not endure this. I begged my aunt to let Josiah have the diamonds.

"She *shall* have the diamonds!" said my aunt peremptorily. "Go and get them, Josiah;" and with some difficulty, she took off her neck the key of the drawer.

'Josiah, much to his discontent, was forced to obey: he went to the boudoir, and brought in the diamonds, which he placed on the bed.

'I was so dreadfully afraid of some scene taking place, which I knew would be very prejudicial to my aunt, that I was greatly relieved at the doctor being announced.

"There," said my aunt, pushing the case towards me with great effort, "I said they should be yours the first day I bought them, if you were a good girl: you have been very good during this illness; take them; and do what you like with them."

"One word," said Josiah, speaking to me: "never forget that those were once Aunt Janet's diamonds, which she bought years ago. They are very precious to me. If you ever desire to part with them, or even to modernise the setting, let me know. I will strive to scrape money together to give the full worth as they stand now."

'Poor Aunt Janet! she little knew what she was doing when she gave me those diamonds.

'The doctor was quite right; my services were not required very long: another seizure took place; and after lingering a few days, my aunt died. The whole of the property was left to Josiah, with the reservation that, if he died without children, the land was to go to my eldest son.

'Of course, we kept up no intercourse with Josiah; but I heard quite enough of his goings-on to shew that I had formed a true estimate of his character. As soon as he came into his wealth, he began to lead a very wild and dissipated life.

'When I placed the diamonds in my husband's hands, I told him that Aunt Janet had given me the option of parting with them, which, if he thought advisable, I should be very happy to do, as I felt our circumstances would not permit of my wearing them. He would not listen to my proposal: he was not pressed for money, he said, and in a few years, I might be fully entitled to wear them.

'Ah, my love, I am so glad that you are not going to marry a man on that horrid Stock Exchange! I am sure the dreadful anxiety I have undergone about Mr Huntly. In those days, he was without the experience which he now possesses, and at a time when steady business was very dull, he took to speculating on his own account, and on behalf of others who were very cunning and plausible. It seemed that he was successful at first, and I used to be quite surprised at his elation of spirits. One day he came home sadly downcast; he had had very heavy losses, chiefly through the villainy of a client, whose debts my husband was bound to make good. He feared it would be necessary for me to part with the diamonds. Of course, I was only too glad to think that we yet possessed the means of setting things to rights.

'According to my promise, I resolved at once to write to Josiah, and offer him the diamonds; and we agreed that I had better ascertain their value from an experienced jeweller, and so mention a sum in the letter.

'Taking Lucy as an escort, I went off the next morning to a very old-established jeweller's at the top of the Strand, where Mr Huntly's family had dealt for many years.

'I gave the case into the hands of the chief partner of the firm, who happened to be in the shop, and asked him to give me some idea of the market-value of the stones.

'He made a very careful examination.

"I suppose, ma'am," said he, "you are aware that these are *not* diamonds?"

'I said, with great warmth, that they had belonged to an aunt of mine, that they were bought at ——'s.

"Excuse me, ma'am," he replied; "they could not have been sold for diamonds; but they are very perfect imitations: at first, I was deceived by them myself."

"Why," I replied, in a state of the greatest excitement, "I was present, years ago, when they were bought—I know they are diamonds!"

"You have asked my opinion," said the jeweller kindly, "and I am very sorry to be obliged to undeceive you. The proof is very simple: I shall, if you will allow me, draw a file over one of these stones; if the stone remains uninjured, it is a diamond."

"Do it!" said I with desperation; but, as I spoke, I felt the man was right. We were ruined—my husband compromised!

'Crash went the file—the stone was starred! I looked for a moment, and fainted.

'When I came to myself, Lucy was attending to me.

"Mr Josiah!" she whispered in my ear.

"What?" said I, dreadfully confused.

"He took them that night; I know he did."

'The shop-people were about us; I bade her be silent. We regained our coach, and returned home. I felt convinced that Josiah had changed the diamonds. Ah me, it was very weary and sad waiting as that day dragged slowly on, and Mr Huntly was so late. When he did come home, he was far calmer than I had expected.

"Thank God," said he, "I know the worst of it—a thousand pounds will set things straight. You told me your aunt gave more than twelve hundred for the diamonds"——

"But"—— said I, in a perfect agony.

"But what?" he exclaimed impatiently.

"Oh, Edward," I replied, "the sooner I tell you the better. They are not diamonds: they are worth nothing!"

'I recounted the events of the morning.

'I shall never forget the end of that day; its utter hopelessness and despair; ay, and the bitter days that followed close upon it. How to raise that thousand pounds? Why, selling all we possessed, at the price things fetch at a sale, we knew would not realise one-half; and then my husband would stand compromised for the rest, a defaulter, with his name posted up. I remember it was all so sad, that I felt I was almost doing wrong to smile at baby as he laughed and crowed in my arms.

'In the absence of direct proof, my husband thought it was hopeless to do anything with regard to Josiah; but I was determined to have Mr Chapman's advice in the matter. That gentleman received me very kindly. I found that Josiah had given him serious offence with regard to some pecuniary transaction arising out of my aunt's will. He was greatly astonished when I told him that the diamonds were false. He confessed that, on after-reflection, he had been very much puzzled by Lucy's persistence in her statement; but if he had entertained any suspicions against Josiah, it was of course nothing beyond the supposition, that Josiah, having asked the girl to meet him, and fearing the affair had been discovered, had endeavoured to shift out of it as best he might. The false diamonds gave a totally new colour to the transaction. The case would stand thus—Josiah might have fallen into extravagances before my aunt's death; indeed he, Mr Chapman, had received pretty strong proof that such was the fact. Unwilling to confess his delinquencies, he had sought some other mode of extrication. Marriage with me would have given him the immediate command of money. That failed. Then the abstraction of the diamonds. He knew that my aunt would wear the diamonds on the night of the dinner-party; Lucy is asked to meet him at the end of the garden on that night; he takes care that she has the keys of the press left for a time in her hands; the diamonds are missing; suspicion naturally falls on Lucy. Ten days have elapsed between the party and the loss of the diamonds being discovered ; the diamonds are altered during that period; and at the very last moment, the false stones are cleverly deposited in a place in which nineteen people out of twenty would never dream of looking for them. But all this supposition, urged Mr Chapman, is worth nothing, unless we can get hold of Josiah's accomplice in the affair.

'Mr Chapman very warmly pledged himself to assist me, though he could not hold out any strong hopes of success.

"In the first place," said he, "we must ascertain whether your aunt ever purchased diamonds or not."

We found, on application, that the jeweller's books shewed that certain diamond ornaments had been sold to my aunt at the price of L.1370. Moreover, the late foreman, an old man, who had since become a partner, was prepared to swear to their being diamonds.

'In order to ascertain Josiah's cognizance of the fraud, Mr Chapman directed me to write to my cousin; and he sketched out a letter which stated that my circumstances obliged me to part with the diamonds; and according to my promise, I gave him the first offer at the price my aunt had originally paid.

'To my surprise, Josiah sent an answer almost by return of post. The letter was written in his usual hypocritical style: he deplored the necessity of my parting with the diamonds, but he was truly obliged to me for not forgetting his request. He believed that diamonds had lately risen in value; and he thought the fairest plan would be that the diamonds should be taken to his jeweller's, and he would direct them to give me the highest market-price, my own jeweller had of course better be consulted.

"He knows all about it," said Mr Chapman, reading the letter, "or he would not have made such a proposal."

"But," said I impatiently, "how will this avail us? The auctioneer is now in our house."

"Have faith, madam," he replied; "I am acting under the advice of a very clever detective."

'He then directed me to write again to Josiah, and say that I had been advised that the most satisfactory mode of disposing of the diamonds would be by public competition.

'Josiah did not communicate with me again, but he wrote to the auctioneer, commissioning him to bid any fair sum at the sale.

'I confess I had given up all hopes of success; but on the very evening of the day on which the sale took place, while we were anxiously waiting for the auctioneer's account of the proceeds, in came Mr Chapman, exhibiting as much glee as his dry legal face would permit.

"Josiah 's bought the diamonds!" he exclaimed.

"What! the paste?"

"No. Josiah 's not such a fool as to give ten thousand pounds for paste."

'We believed that Mr Chapman must have been suddenly bereft of his senses; but he proved his words by a cheque on his own banker's for eight thousand pounds; and further than that, he placed in my hands a little box containing Aunt Janet's veritable diamonds.

'This was Mr Chapman's story. It had been arranged that the false diamonds should be on view with the rest of the effects; but they were to be placed under a glass case, and the detective, as an auctioneer's man in charge, was to watch narrowly all the people who came to view them. It was also agreed, on any person desiring a closer inspection, that the detective was to make excuses about the key of the case having been mislaid. Several people, evidently dealers in jewellery, had grumbled a great deal at only being able to see the diamonds through the glass, but nobody had expressed a doubt as to their being real. At last, two men came in together, and while the one was complaining about the key, the other, at a glance, told his companion that it did not matter; he knew they were only paste.

'How could that man be certain at a glance that the stones were paste?

'The detective motioned to Mr Chapman, who was standing near. Mr Chapman went up to the man, and drawing him aside, told him that he was quite right; the diamonds were only paste, and it would be worth money to any person who could say how they came to be paste.

'By dint of clever examination, and promises of reward, the man confessed that he had made those very imitation stones himself! When?—Somewhere about two years before. For whom?—Well, he didn't mind saying that—the fellow was lately dead—Benson, a Jew money-lender, who often employed him for that sort of job. On whose behalf was Benson acting?—Ah! Benson kept his affairs very close; but it did happen there was a great press at the end to get this work done; and when he took it home to Benson's, he hurried at once into the private office, and there was the gentleman, all impatient to get possession of the false stones. Benson was angry with him for coming into the office. He never found out the gentleman's name; but he was certain he should know him again. And the diamonds?—Yes, he fancied he knew where the diamonds were; the set had not been broken up; they were in the hands of a man who wanted a long price—diamonds were rising in the market; the man could bide his time.

"Now," said Mr Chapman, "that gentleman you chanced to see is very anxious to get those diamonds back again; he will give the man his own price for them if they are brought to my office to-morrow morning, and something handsome to you in the bargain."

'The man agreed. Mr Chapman wrote to Josiah, making an appointment for the following morning, at eleven o'clock, respecting some executor business.

'The man duly arrived at the office with the diamonds, and Mr Chapman had them inspected by an experienced jeweller, who declared that they were genuine, and that they exactly corresponded with the original setting.

'Josiah kept the appointment.

'I can almost see Mr Chapman before me now as he described his interview with Josiah. His features never lost their sedate business aspect, but his small gray eyes twinkled with waggish exultation.

'Josiah was very ill-tempered, rude, about some proposal of Mr Chapman's respecting my aunt's affairs.

"You are an ungrateful fellow, Josiah," said Mr Chapman; "I'm always doing what I can for you. I heard that you were very anxious to get hold of your aunt's diamonds."

"Yes," replied Josiah; "I told the auctioneer to bid for me; but he says those diamonds have turned out to be sham."

"That's just it, Josiah; I have given myself all the pains in the world to get the real ones for you."

"Fiddlesticks!"

"Fact. They were in the hands of a Mr Benson. (Josiah turned deadly pale.) I find that person is dead; but I've a young man in the next office who was employed by Mr Benson; he says he once saw a gentleman in Mr Benson's office"——

"I am very much indebted to you for your trouble," exclaimed Josiah, with the deepest of scowls on his countenance; "I'm only too glad to get my poor aunt's diamonds. What am I to pay?"

"Ten thousand pounds!" replied Mr Chapman very deliberately. (Josiah made use of very strong expressions.) Perhaps you don't think they are genuine," said Mr Chapman. "Shall we have the young man in?"

"I'll give the money," said Josiah hastily.

"Write a cheque."

"I have not so much money at my banker's."

"You forget," said Mr Chapman, "that the money for that estate is lodged at your banker's, pending the completion of the purchase: it will just suffice."

'Josiah wrote the cheque. "Curse you," he exclaimed, as he gave it to Mr Chapman.

"You ought to say thank you, Josiah. I'm sure I've taken a deal of trouble for you, acting as a friend. Now, if I had acted as a lawyer"——

"Give me the diamonds," said Josiah.

'Mr Chapman placed the box in Josiah's hand. Josiah was about to leave the room. "You will excuse me," said Mr Chapman blandly, "for making the remark; but your late aunt gave her *diamonds*—not the paste-stones—to your cousin. It is of course for you to consider what claim your cousin has to those diamonds."

'Josiah considered for a moment, placed the box on the table, and skulked out of the room.'

DROUGHT AND ITS LESSONS.

In writing of the floods in the early part of 1859, it was easy to be cheerful and philosophical, because the evil was over for the time, the losses had been accepted as irremediable, and the picturesque aspect began to appear, under which we come to regard past trials. It is otherwise at this moment in treating of drought. I am sitting in the midst of the devastation caused by it; and all around me are feeling the heaviness of a life which is largely occupied in struggles to provide from day to day so essential an article as water. If we do not derive some good lessons from such an experience as we are undergoing during this summer of 1859, we must be thoroughly unteachable, and pain and anxiety will be the unmixed evils which they never need be.

In many parts of the kingdom, the drought of this year is more severe than any on record; but elderly people remember things which should have taught our fathers to prepare us better for the present visitation. The summer of 1820 is associated in the minds of those who remember it at all with the excitement of Queen Caroline's trial. The heat struck down dead several labourers in the fields, and many horses on the roads; and the night seemed to be turned into day. In London, the Parks were thronged to the last minute allowed, and the streets were full all night; and so it was in the country towns, where the neighbours lent one another newspapers, and went about gossiping over the great trial throughout the cool hours. Not the less, however, did multitudes all day line the roads by which news was to travel; and all who had horses rode out to meet the mails, and gallop home with the news. It was too hot for sleep or rest: the gardens yielded no pleasure, for they were as brown as thatch, or as white as the roads; and there was discomfort in almost every household, from the scarcity of the first necessary of life. In the grazing districts, the grass was dry before it was mown, and sapless as saw-dust. The cattle were restless in the meadows, their tongues hanging out, and their tails whisking incessantly among the swarms of flies which never paused for a moment in their persecution. It was a piteous sight to see cows and horses perpetually returning to the hollows or ditches where they were accustomed to find ponds and brooks, but where now there was only mud or dust. The hot summer passed away; and it does not appear that anybody learned anything by it.

The summer of 1826 was worse—at least in the midland counties. There the work-people sat up all night to watch the springs. They were even more tired than usual with their day's work; but they could not sleep, and must take the only chance of getting water. Their fretful children would not lie still; they were themselves too feverish to sleep; and groups of neighbours, therefore, took their pitchers and their infants and sat, in hope deferred, beside the springs till the sun was up again. The most welcome present that the citizens of any rank could send to each other was a pitcher of fresh, cool water; and it was offered and accepted as a bottle of Tokay would be in ordinary times. In Lord Dudley's beautiful park at Himley, the lake, ponds, and streams were so entirely dried up that the deer could not be preserved. They were drooping and dying, when Lord Dudley, whose brain was giving way under the disease which soon became hopeless insanity, resolved to turn the incident to account, to gratify his crazy avarice. He ordered the deer to be killed, and cut up and sold as venison. The whole country round was unsuspecting and delighted. Ordinary folk could now send a haunch of venison to their friends; and all who contemplated giving a dinner at any future time would give it now, since they could set their guests down to venison. The case turned out even worse than the venison-suppers in backwoods' travelling, which 'keep the word of promise to the ear, and break it to the hope.' In America, the venison is unmanageably tough; in Worcestershire, it was flabby. It was worse. Suffice it that the sellers presently asked twopence per pound for it, and immediately after could not get a farthing. Throughout the higher *terrain* of the midland counties the wells stood idle and empty, their buckets cracked, and the ropes dangling. Brewers' stocks were rapidly exhausted. Food would not keep. Dogs were suspected. When the memorable thunder-storms of August burst over the land, the most panic-stricken enjoyed hearing the rain come down.

That was a long time ago; and now, after thirty-three years, we find ourselves no better prepared to encounter a drought than we were then. Yet we might have been. Other people are. There are whole provinces in continental countries where the people and their fields are as nearly independent of the season in regard to water-supply as we should be of inundation, if we had carried agricultural and arterial drainage to their highest perfection throughout the kingdom. What they have done, we might do. What might our condition have been, then, and what is it, in this summer of 1859? It will be happy for us, and more than we deserve, if the question is not even more serious in the autumn than it is now.

Scientific men give us, with one accord, the following account of how we are supplied with water. Taking the average of the surface of England, 1800 tons of water per acre is the amount of rain-fall. Of this quantity, about ninety tons reach the subsoil, and replenish the underground reservoirs from which the springs are derived. The rest goes away in evaporation, and vegetation, and drainage. From April to October, very little water sinks down to the reservoirs, as vegetation uses up more, and evaporation goes on at its most rapid rate. The smallest evaporation takes place in the four months which follow October; and they are usually our most rainy months; so that our main reliance for plenty of water is on a rainy November, December, January, and February. More than 83 per cent. of the replenishment of the springs is ordinarily supplied during that third-part of the year. If November and December are duly wet, we may be easy about the water-supply of the next year, except in the places which have few or no springs, and depend on the immediate rain-fall. If rain falls in January, too, all is safe. It is not asserted that people feel thus easy or uneasy, or look into the grounds of expectation for the next year. Most of us would as soon think of consulting a fortune-teller as to the weather at next haymaking or harvest. Few of us know enough about the matter to occupy ourselves with it so long beforehand; it would be well if we did; for it is inconceivable that we should not attempt to store up a water-supply, if we were rationally convinced that the spontaneous one would fall short.

Meantime, those who do understand the case have been for some time warning us that the rain-fall during the non-evaporating months has been deficient ever since 1852. The farmers have not needed to be told that the springs have, during that time, been shrinking, year by year. It appears that for six years before the potato-rot, the winter rain-fall had considerably exceeded the average, that it was very irregular for the next six, being for two of the six rather below, and for the other four considerably above, the average. Then came the very wet winter of 1852–53, when nearly eleven inches of rain fell, instead of six and one-third inches. Every one of the six years since that date has been far below the average; and the last winter the lowest of all, being scarcely more than half the average. In fact, the rain-fall of the last two winters has barely exceeded the average supply of one. This may appear strange in connection with our recent complaints of floods; but a little consideration will shew how the two facts may be reconciled. After an actively evaporating month of October, we had a very dry November. We have not forgotten the bitter winds, and the early, intense, and protracted frost which surprised and troubled us. December was dry till near its close; and the rains of January were very partial. We must remember, too, that inundations are caused more frequently by the sudden rush than by the total quantity of water.

Long before the rainy months arrived, the farmers in the eastern counties were last autumn paying for water for their cattle. In February, the springs were not flowing as they ought to be; and they did not give forth a fuller stream as spring advanced. On the contrary, they did not answer to the draught from them; and in May, when they usually reach their greatest height, all were low, and many were actually dry. Meantime, April had been dry, and very unfavourable to vegetation. The beginning of the month was like the middle of May; and then came a sudden frost—more disastrous than that of November; and snow fell thick, and drifted among the hills of the northern counties and of Scotland. Since that snow, no serviceable rain has fallen throughout large portions of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The inequality of weather has been remarkable. We have heard of floods here and there; and the thunder-storms, attended by heavy rain, have been numerous and severe in many places, including London. But while the water stood a foot deep in London streets, and filled cellars, and covered wharfs along the Thames, the inhabitants of the south-eastern counties were seeing all things turning to dust before their eyes. Lawns and grass-plots were mere cakes of brown fibres; gardens went to ruin altogether; and the cows and carriage-horses of the gentry were kept alive by water which paid ninepence toll, twice a day, in its course from the distant river. Matters were worse in June in those counties than they were in September of last year. What, then, is the prospect for the coming autumn, it being absolutely known that the springs were never filled?

We hear most about the eastern counties, because the inquiries made have been illustrated chiefly by their condition; but the phenomena of drought have been even more conspicuously manifested in other regions. In Scotland, we heard from many parts that there was no hay; that everything was burned up; and that the young grouse were perishing of thirst. From Ireland, we had news of a fine potato-crop, but of little else, till some genial rains fell at midsummer. In another week or two, the supply of water in Dublin became insufficient for household and industrial purposes; and all luxurious use of it was stopped by the authorities—the citizens being choked with dust from the discontinuance of the practice of watering the streets. While writing, we read that, except in a part of Galway, all Ireland is parched with drought, so that the spring crops in many parts are not enough to employ the sickle, and all hope of green crops is so completely over, that the farmers are sowing rape in their 'vacant fields.'

While the French emperor was buying up our stocks of hay, the prospect of an average supply became daily more hopeless; and it is certain that owners of cattle and horses will be heavily taxed as the winter comes on for our general ignorance of the right method of guarding ourselves against an insufficient water-supply.

The smaller details which come under one's personal observation give, however, a more accurate and lively impression of the seriousness of such a calamity as that of the present season; and I will, therefore, describe the state of things in the district in which I live.

In April, it became clear throughout the great fruit-counties, that the year must be a disastrous one to the owners of cherry, and all plum and pear, orchards. A cherry-crop worth L.200 in ordinary seasons was destroyed by frost in one night; and this was only a specimen of what was happening throughout half the kingdom. In our northern county, Westmoreland, this disappointment about fruit was the first of a dreary series. So little rain followed the frost, that the sowing of root-crops was difficult, from the caked and unprepared character of the soil. No rain followed to encourage the seed to sprout. Shoots appeared at intervals, leaving long bare spaces. How anything came up, was the wonder; for all that was previously growing stopped. After the 26th of April, no rain fell. The grass, shut up for hay, could not overtop the butter-cups. The gardens could not be watered, for the wells were getting dry, one after another, and the streams were becoming a mere chain of stagnant pools, warm and disagreeable for household purposes.

Such pump-water as could be had was muddy, or had fresh-water shrimps wriggling in it. Owners of carts began fixing a barrel in the vehicle, and selling water from the lake at sixpence the barrel. Owners of cattle spent freely, to water their stock; and private families collected water patiently for many days, to meet the needs of washing-day. Children who had pet flowers, and boys or men who held prize plants, grew more anxious every day about keeping them alive. Every drop from the wash-basins—baths were by this time a too selfish luxury—and from the wash-tub was given to the most necessary vegetables, with daily diminishing hope of keeping anything alive. The character of travelling in the lake district was quite altered. A new and dreary silence prevailed in valleys always hitherto resounding with the voice of many waters. Scale Force, and Lodore contained each a mere runnel of water; and Ara Force was actually abolished. Throughout its entire ravine, all was dry, silent, and desolate. The tarns on the uplands were basins of caked earth, or of slime; and instead of floating blossoms of water-lilies, there were only their dirty, contorted, shrunken roots sticking up in the slime. The mountain slopes grew yellower every day, and the fields in the levels browner. The great oaks and other deep-rooted forest-trees began to droop and shew the wrong side of their foliage, like shrubs that have stood in a strong wind for a whole day. It became a matter of grave daily toil to provide water for ducks and fowls; and the restless cows were perpetually going to their usual watering-place, and turning away disappointed. Thus matters went on till the 20th of June, when a little rain fell in the night. On the 22d, 23d, and 26th, there were some heavy showers. We hoped our troubles were over now. What their pressure was, may be judged by the remark of a visitor, that it would frighten her to think of going through such an experience a second time; but that, as it *was* to happen, she was glad to have been in the midst of it, as it would be a thing to talk of to her latest day. When she said this, our trial was recommencing, and while I write, our condition is truly calamitous. After the 28th, there was no further relief. There had not been rain enough to fill the springs, nor even to penetrate the soil. At present, the soil is mere hot dust to any depth reached by the spade. Throughout whole valleys, where the farms form a chain from end to end, and the hills are usually peopled with grazing herds, the cattle are all sold off. The yards and sheds are empty, and the farmer has little diversion from gloomy thoughts—his stock being gone at much less than their value, and his crops dried to powder. The grass is still standing, sapless, and in the seed—bad hay, but left for the chance of St Swithin's mercies. The gentry are going away to places where there is water. Families are sending their linen to distant towns to be washed. The night does not bring rest, as usual. The servants are sent to bed at sunset, because they choose, with the generosity which they shew in seasons of trouble, to get up in the middle of the night, and collect water enough to carry us through the day. We look out every hour to windward, in lingering hope of seeing clouds coming; and by the time we are settling to sleep, the servants are rising, and stealing out in the dawn, with cans and garden-engine, to fish up, at its coolest, such water as may have collected since night fell. But, other people pursuing the same plan, the neighbourhood is all alive, and collected at the brooks. All day long, everything is perishing. The young broods in the poultry-yards, which seemed to do well for the first month of their lives, pine and die off. There is no end of burying young turkeys, ducks, and chickens, even though they are kept supplied with enough to drink. The most striking object under the phase of drought is perhaps the mountains. They turn before one's eyes to red rocks, like those in the Arabian deserts. Hour by hour, the green covering shrinks, and the red spaces expand, till we hardly know our own hills. The lakes contract, and are deformed by broad new margins of mud, or of decaying vegetation. We are astonished at the severity of the experience, never having conceived the anxiety of watching in vain for weeks, during which the precious summer is slipping away, nor been aware of the number of points at which the nuisance would touch us in our daily lives. St Swithin has made no difference, except in deepening our disappointment; an indescribable apprehension creeps over us, an idea that 'it *cannot* rain;' and the question haunts us, whether we have not shot an albatross. One pleasant relief comes from London—dozens of bottles of Malvern water, and blocks of American ice, packed in salt and saw-dust—sent by thoughtful friends. Such is now our situation, and while I describe it, the glass is high, the sun glares; there is not a cloud in the sky: and the news flies through the neighbourhood that there is not a drop of water up at the great Hall, where such a phenomenon was never known before. Could anything have been done to avert all or any of this distress and loss? Yes; the evil might have been deferred and mitigated; though, perhaps, not, in such an exceptional season as this, altogether avoided.

What do people do in countries where drought is an annual incident, as in India and China, and as we might add, Lombardy and Piedmont? They store up the water when they can get it, and let it out, with art and nice economy, when it is wanted by the vegetation. It would require several columns to give an idea of what is done in India, where areas of many square miles are reclaimed from a desert state to one of the richest fertility by husbanding water in its season. The future prosperity of India depends more on irrigation than upon any one other art or process within human means. Scarcely less striking is the fertility secured throughout the great plains which stretch southwards from the spurs of the Alps. We have lately been reading a great deal about what the French army found there—the interminable verdure of the mulberry trees—'trees planted by rivers of water' for hundreds of miles, and always ready to yield large crops of juicy leaves, in the hottest weather, to the breeders of silk-worms. Were they so helpless in a drought as we are, the people of Lombardy and of Piedmont would soon be starved, in such a climate as theirs. The levels of all the great streams are therefore ascertained, and reservoirs are formed where they are wanted; and sluices are placed, and channels carried down, so that water can be administered to the soil with regularity and in abundance.

This irrigation is one of the gravest interests of society in those provinces beyond the Alps. The quarrels of neighbours, and the controversies between districts, relate more to water-supply than to any other topic. Lawsuits spring up along the course of rivers, and jealous and spiteful men can make themselves extremely well hated by turning a cock, or closing a sluice in an injurious way. Count Cavour has taken this to heart, both as a statesman and a country gentleman. We have recently heard a good deal about the occupation of his lands in the province of Vercelli by the Austrians, and have learned how extensively they are irrigated, for the growth of rice and other products. As the proprietor of these lands, Count Cavour has used his influence in the province to get a 'water-parliament' established; that is, a council elected by proprietors of water-rights. By this council, the whole apparatus of irrigation is guarded, kept up, and improved; all operations are watched and reported on; and all complaints are heard and adjusted; so that, except when the Austrians are there, the territory produces in abundance all sorts of crops except jealousy and strife. Does not such an arrangement reproach us with ignorance, indolence, and wanton waste? Where is all the water gone which overflowed us so mischievously last winter? We let it run to waste; and what is our condition now for want of it?

For the common people of our country, however, perhaps the most impressive example is that of the German peasantry. Some ancestor of each peasant who has a patch of patrimony once did for that patch what the owner of to-day will do with every yard of ground he adds to it. The turf, or the soil, as far as the subsoil, is removed—cautiously shifted to one side; the level is carefully ascertained; and then, whichever way there is an incline, it is made regular and continuous, and as gradual as possible. This done, the soil is replaced—the incline being preserved—and little channels, a couple of inches wide, are made at regular distances, intersecting larger ones at right angles. Water is turned into these, as often as wanted, from the store at the top, whether it be the river or an artificial reservoir. If strangers, at first delighted to see the shining runnels in the grass or among the furrows, stand aghast at hearing at what a cost of labour the blessing is obtained, they are immediately consoled by finding that the expense is usually repaid by the crops of the first year, and in the most difficult cases, by those of the second. In grass-lands, four crops a year is the rule, both with the Germans and the Italians.

Now, how many of our landlords, tenants, or small proprietors have any accurate idea whatever of the levels and inclines on their lands, or have ever thought of gathering the rain-fall, and letting it out at pleasure in dry weather, over the length and breadth of their fields and meadows? No part of Mr Mechi's farm is ever drowned or parched; and Lord Hatherton has achieved a great fame by his water-meadows at Teddesley, near Penkridge, in Staffordshire. He has turned a worthless and unsightly waste into an Eden, by united drainage and irrigation. He tapped the swollen swamps and spongy bogs, and drew off the water into a great reservoir, whence it descends to the farm-buildings, for use and the drink of the stock, and as the moving-power of the machinery set up there: and thence it is led down, by methods resembling those of Lombardy and Germany, to fertilise above 100 acres of meadow-land, which produce twice as much hay as formerly, at the cost of 4s. 6d. per acre for laying the water off and on. Mr Bickford's method of irrigation has become increasingly known and acted upon for several years past; and we must hope that, under the great impulse which now carries agricultural science and art to a height never conceived of by our fathers, our countrymen will take in hand the great work of compensating for the irregularities of the seasons by the devices of human forethought. The losses in this single year by flood and drought must be as great as those of a year of war, probably much greater; and yet they might have been avoided. In a region where lakes lie in a chain or a group, divided by the levels of valleys, it is a shame that those levels should ever be parched by drought; and, indeed, wherever there is any inequality of surface, either superfluity or deficiency of water ought hereafter to be considered a disgrace. Under the sore suffering of the existing drought, we cannot help thinking that this new mastery of the irregularities of seasons will date from 1859.

PROXIME ACCESSERUNT.[*]

In the eyes of that gross world of which the poet justly complains, that it only credits what is done, and is cold to all that might have been, a miss is as good as a mile; not to have succeeded is all one with never having well endeavoured. With *our* Readers, on the contrary—that 'Other Public,' of so infinitely superior a character—we feel sure that no such sordid maxim holds; but rather this: ''Tis better to have tried and lost, than never to have tried at all;' that is to say, if the attempt was commendable. Even in the cricket-field, when a man has done his best, surprised, back-handed, overreached, to catch the unexpected ball, and fails, the charitable spectators are ready to exclaim 'Well-tried,' and only the malicious and mean-minded sneer forth 'Butter-fingers!' And shall *we* be worse than Amateur Bricklayers, Bat-and-Ball Lunatics, Cricketers?

Proxime accessit (he got very near the prize) was what was once written upon our noble selves at a certain classical seminary, when nothing but Jones *minimus* being a better boy, prevented us from getting the Testimonial for General Good Conduct during a whole preceding half-year. We have the certificate still in our possession, with Doctor Magister Morum's own signature appended thereto—which, if he had reserved for a certain stamped document instead of using another man's, would have prevented him from leaving this country at the Queen's expense, and done him a great deal more good than it ever did us.

If it is so *very* heroic to be successful, it must be something like that to come within an inch of success. If Miss Isa Craig earned Glory by carrying away the prize—which she richly deserved—at the Crystal Palace Burns Centenary meeting, from six hundred-and-twenty competitors, Mr Frederic Myers, who was considered so nearly equal to her that the examiners had difficulty in deciding between them, ought to have half a halo or so, also, surely! Consider this young gentleman's disappointment, not to say disgust, when he discovered how near he had been to the laurel-crown and its revenue; imagine his criticisms upon the more successful lyric; pardon the language he probably indulged in within the privacy of his own apartment; and let us by all means give him a cheer. Let us applaud, too, the numerous pleasant singers—especially entitled to our courtesy, as being many of them females, and all of them with a certain feminine plaintiveness inseparable from the true poet—whose efforts, though unsuccessful, were allowed to be 'of remarkable merit;' and, in particular, let us hail those twenty-six who 'evinced much power of thought and poetic culture,' and of whom the six best were even recommended by the judges for publication. The collection just issued[†] of the Burns Centenary Poems, consisting, with a few exceptions, of fifty of the best unsuccessful effusions evoked by the genius of the Bard, and without, of course, so much as a thought of getting the prize-money, is really a most interesting and cheering volume. It not only forms a triumphant answer, in its wealth of thought and vigour of expression, to the rubbish about an 'iron age,' and an 'unpoetical era,' that has been pitchforked upon this country ever since the Thames Tunnel was completed, but it exhibits such a universally high standard of poetic excellence as could hardly have been expected by the most sanguine believer in our intellectual progress. We are not comparing the Tritons of the past generation with those of the present—for the Tritons did not compete in any great shoal for the Crystal Palace prize—but taking Minnow with Minnow, minor poet with minor poet, we do not believe that at any other period of our literature, fifty—no, nor five-and-twenty such good poems could have been written by as many authors upon any single subject.

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[*] They were within a head of the Winner.

[†] *The Burns Centenary Poems*. T. Murray, Glasgow.

It is gratifying to remark, that out of the seven best poems (including the successful one) recommended for publication, no less than four are by professional bards—that is to say, by persons who have already published a verse-volume; namely, Miss Isa Craig, Mr Gerald Massey, Mr Arthur Munby, and Mr Stanyan Bigg: a striking fact which we recommend to the notice of those who underrate the Art of writing poetry. We do not deny that there are a few rather indifferent performers among these fearless forty-five, —for five out of the fifty still withhold their names—and in particular some who make unnecessarily frequent allusion to 'Coila,' and introduce a superfluity of 'urns' (for the purpose of rhyming with Burns) sufficient to stock a new necropolis; but the great excellence of others more than restores the balance, and places the average ability of the volume high indeed.

The Laureate's solemn Death-march of the Duke has no such passage, although the poems are alike in many points, as this one, culled from Mr Myers's ode, the *proxime accessit* to that of Miss Isa Craig:

O silent shapes athwart the darkening sky!
Magnificence of many folded hills,
Where the dead mist hangs, and the lone hawks cry,
Seamed with the white fall of a thousand rills;
O lucid lakes! serene from shore to shore,
With promontories set of solemn pines,
Broad mirrors which the pale stars tremble o'er,
Deep-drawn among the misty mountain lines;
O holy hearths, intemerate of crime!
O tale of martyrs by the flickering sod!
O righteous race, in steadfast toil sublime!
O noblest poem, 'Let us worship God!'
Ye taught him, shaping truthful days;
Of you he told to men, for he
From wayside reeds sweet tone could raise,
More dear than full accord of symphony,
Knowing that whatsoe'er the poet sings,
Of prototyped in nature or in man,
Moves deeply, though it touch not wrath of kings
Or frantic battle-van.

But most intent the people hears,
Tranced to silence, thrilled to tears,
When the joys of love and fears
Fall in music on their ears;
Stirring noble sympathies,
Waking hope and high desire,
And, to introspective eyes,
Granting glimpse of Heaven's fire.

And again, what fit conclusion—

Ah! yet we trust he findeth end to ill,
Nor in deep peace remembereth misery,
Who in the heart of his loved land is still,
Between the mountains and the clamorous sea.
There all night the deeps are loud,
Billow far to billow roaring,
But he, sleeping in his shroud,
Heareth not the waters pouring.
Yea, though the sun shall wheel a splendrous form
Unseen, above the dim cloud-cataract,
Though lightnings glimmer to the rainy tract,
And all the land be wan with storm,
He knows not, wont of old to see,
In high thought severed from his kind,
Beyond the wrack Divinity,
Jehovah on the wind.

O story sadder than dethronèd kings—
A poet lost to earth!
Yea, though his land in plenty sings,
Forgetful of her dearth,
And though his people in just laws is great,
And willing fealty to an equal state,
And though her commerce on all ocean thrives,
And every province swarms with happy lives,
Yet weep the great heart hidden in the sod;
All else to man through faithful toil arrives—
The poet straight from God.

There is no doubt, indeed, from whence this young author—but seventeen years of age, as the newspapers report—for the present derives his inspirations; but we are very much mistaken if one with such a well within him of his own will be long contented to go elsewhere for the Pierian water. We hope to hear of him once more, at least, before, to use his own fine image, *his glory broadens from the plunge of death.*

Surely the Spirit, 'from whom Scotia's sons inherit their pathos and their fire,' must have dowered this modest poet, who has motto in place of name, himself not sparely, since he can make her sing thus sweetly on the birth of Burns!

'Of old,' she saith, 'this land of mine was noted
For singers many a one;
O'er her wild tales their rainbow-lays they floated,
Born of her storm and sun.

'I only touched them with my inspiration,
Put harps into their hands—
There was enough of love and indignation,
And legend in the land!

'To them the "gurly ocean" brought a wailing
Of girls in "kames o' goud"—
"Sir Patrick and our true loves are not sailing
Home—for the sea's their shroud!"

'The summer twilight shewed them Elfland's lady
Riding by Eildon-tree—
Sweet chimed her horse's bells through forest shady
Like the far silver sea.

'O the moss-trooper's catch of merry slaughter
Red on the diamond-dew,
Of jingling spurs by banks of Eden Water,
Green gleuves and feathers blue!

'O the sweet wish that softly dieth—dieth,
Griefless at last to be
Turf-happed and sound asleep, as she that lieth
On fair Kirkconnel-lee.

'Far from fight, frolic, wine, desire, or sorrow,
Round wild hearts, green grass! twice,
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow
In quietness divine.

* * * *

'Why are no new songs chanted, O my singers?
Sweet Poesy liveth yet—
Along the gray cliffs glide its sunny fingers;
The autumnal violet

'Of sunset wraps it in the gentle weather;
With spring's wild-rose it stirs;
It lieth purple-rich along the heather,
And golden on the furze.

'The only ornaments it needs are lying
Around ye and above,
In stars, and hills, in human hopes undying,
In human grief, and love.

'Dear to my soul, O baby poet, rest thee,
Hush thee, my darling! hush.
With the sweet lintwhite's nature, I invest thee,
With music like the thrush.

'All Scottish legends shall thy fancy fashion,
All airs that richly flow,
Laughing with frolic, tremulous with passion,
Broken with love-lorn woe.

'Ballads, whose beauty years have long been stealing,
And left few links of gold,
Shall to thy quaint and subtle touch of healing
Seem fairer—not less old.

'Gray Cluden and the vestal's choral cadence
Thy might shall wake therewith;
Till boatmen hang their oars, to hear the maidens
Upon the moonlit Nith.

'Thine, too, the strains of battle nobly coming,
From Bruce, or Wallace wight,
Such as the Highlander shall oft be humming
Before some famous fight.

'Nor only these—for thee the hawthorn hoary
Shall in new wreaths be wrought—
The "crimson-tippèd" daisy wear fresh glory,
Born of poetic thought.

'From the "wee cow'ring beastie" shalt thou borrow
A wondrous wealth of rhyme,
A noble tenderness of human sorrow,
Thou moralist sublime!

'O but the mountain breezes shall be pleasant
Upon the sunburnt brow
Of that poetic and triumphant peasant,
Driving his laurelled plough!'

Not

The wild wit that mars the holy hymning,
The stains upon the stole,
The spray-drops from the sea of passage dimming
The windows of the soul,

shall hurt the pure completeness of Robert Burns; they are but spots in the sun. In the great 'choral whole' no false notes are to be detected.

Hark! round the clay-built cot and cradle lowly
By banks of bonny Doon,
A voice of diverse songs, some wild, some holy—
A many-mingling tune.

But all at last with solemn sweet surprises
Like anthems die away—
And o'er the glee of *Tam o' Shanter* rises
The *Cotter's Saturday.*

And from a multitude beside the river,
And on the mountain sod,
Swells, and rings up, and up, as if for ever,
'Come, let us worship God!'

It is curious, but in no way difficult, to note under what great master each disciple sits. From Sydenham Vicarage—a peaceful haunt, as one would think, enough—and from a lady-poet, too, there comes this echo of the Macaulay trumpet-blare, but by no means deficient in a certain genuine ring and spirit of its own:

Veil, veil the warlike trophy;
Put shield and spear away;
Nor let the clanging armour
Wake echoes here to-day:
But bring the flail and corn-sheaf,
The scythe and ploughshare bring,
And hither call the minstrel
To touch the golden string.
Twine, twine the bay and holly,
A poet's garland twine;
For Robert Burns to-day returns,
And bids you deck his shrine.
Since, to the cotter's homestead,
Wee 'Rob the Rhymer' came,
A hundred times Auld Reekie
Hath lit the Yule-log's flame;
A hundred years have finished
Their journey round the sun;
A hundred snow-white mantles
For earth hath Winter spun;
A hundred times our father,
He of the noiseless hands,
His scythe hath whet, his glass hath set—
The glass with ceaseless sands.

T. Watson, of Arbroath, also begins his melody in spirited ballad-cadence:

Leave ye now the laurel growing,
Break no holly boughs to-day;
Evermore the 'leaves and berries'
Round his head will rustling play.
Bring ye but the flowering aloe,
Add it to the wreath he wears,
For the tree that fadeth never
Blooms but in a hundred years!

But this promise of his opening lines is scarce redeemed by the entire poem.

Mrs Alfred Munster of Belfast has, in our judgment, of all the songsters from the Sister Island, the strongest wing and blithest note, and we fitly conclude our extracts from a few of her spirited verses:

O brother! the birk and heather that wave on thine own wild hills,
The broomy knowes, and the gowaned shaws, and the songs of the mountain rills;
The rosy-fringed, gold-eyed daisies, the corn on the sloping leas—
How can the world forget thee, whose songs were of themes like these?

Never a dew-drop glistened, on the pearl-white buds of the thorn,
Never a glad lark singing, soared to the gates of morn,
Never a soft glance met thee, never a deed of wrong,
But the shrine in thy breast gave upward its incense of burning song.

The golden fields of the harvest, the sough of the wind at night,
The glens and streams where the stars look down with a weird and wavering light,
The commonest things of nature, the scenes we pass heedless by,
Grew lovely, and grand, and glorious, in the light of thy poet-eye.

Who shall presume to judge thee? Is it the calm, cold voice
Of him who smiles when his neighbour mourns, or frowns when the poor rejoice?
Is it the sainted icebergs, armed without and within,
That shall close in thy face the door of life, and mark thee a child of sin?

Is it the temperate pulses, that ne'er in their wildest heat
Could dream of a throb akin to thine, in its tempestuous beat?
Is it the well-trained Christians, shielded from sin and shame,
Who, false to the law their Master taught, will ban the dead poet's name?

This lady was only not among the 'highly commended,' we fancy, because she has not fulfilled the conditions of the givers of the prize in respect to the length of her poem. We can hardly overpraise the discretion exhibited by the judges, Messrs Monckton Milnes, Tom Taylor, and Theodore Martin (to whom this volume is properly inscribed), in selecting the grain from the chaff, or rather the large grain from the small grain, nor do we find scarce a single instance wherein our own humble judgment would reverse their decision.

What dreadful things those 'dauntless three' must have had to 'go through' in the reading of those other Six Hundred! We ourselves are not without a touch of vertigo after these fifty. Burns, earns, learns, turns, urns—the whole line out of Walker's *Rhyming Dictionary*—revolve in our sated ears like a Merry-go-round in the worst of spirits. How did the three decide, we wonder, in the case of Craig *v.* Myers, since their unequal number precluded the otherwise obvious expedient of tossing for the victor—'Man or woman?' What precautions have they taken against the personal vengeance of their Six-hundred-and-twenty deadly enemies, and does Mr Monckton Milnes wear mediæval chain-armour beneath his nineteenth-century waistcoat?

A number of interesting questions, in short, arise, which we should be much gratified by their answering; but, in the meantime, about one thing there can be no sort of question at all; if they did not equal the patience of Job—who, by the by, was never tried in this manner—*proxime accesserunt*, they fell very little short of that Patriarch.

FRENCH RAILWAY BENEVOLENCE.

There was lately a dinner given in London by a Railway Benevolent Society, the object of which is to afford relief to the workmen employed on the railways of England. We do not doubt that the gentlemen who compose it have undertaken a work not less necessary than meritorious; but we venture to offer the great companies with which they are connected a hint which, derived from our Gallican neighbours, may be with great advantage adopted here. If we might venture to be hypercritical, we would suggest that English charity is too fond of putting its hand in its pocket; freely and nobly indeed, but sometimes not with the best results. The virtue of almsgiving is in no country in Europe so extensively and generally exercised as in England. There is no form of misery for which public charity has not provided a refuge; and when exceptional cases, which general rules cannot include, come to light, private munificence is ever ready to give every assistance. Of late years, the insufficiency of this is beginning to be felt; and, imitating the worthy examples of some other lands, many have been found to devote a portion of their time to seek out and assuage the wretchedness which shrinks from public gaze. Still, our charity is wanting in ingenuity.

We desire now to call attention to a great commercial corporation, which is happily distinguished by having taken the initiative in ameliorating the position of its servants, and by the success which has attended its efforts. The problem was a difficult one to solve; for, on the one hand, it was sought to provide every aid which could be required, and, on the other, to do so in a way which should not interfere with individual liberty and the feeling of independence. We extract our narrative from the report of a commission to inquire into the regulation of French railways, with the object of devising means to prevent a recurrence of the disastrous accidents which occurred towards the end of the year 1853. It enters fully into the precautions adopted to insure individual safety, and it also details at length the efforts made by the various great companies to promote the well-being of the vast numbers they employ.

The report places in a striking light the really noble ideas which have inspired the administrators of these greatest of national workshops. It shews them seeking something more than merely to secure the largest possible amount of dividend for their shareholders, and yet even in this they are more successful than our own railways, since their shares stand at an average premium of more than 30 per cent. The shares of the railway of which we are about to speak are at more than 150 per cent. premium. They consider themselves as the natural guardians of the servants they employ, and, as such, bound to introduce among them those charitable institutions which Christian ingenuity has devised for the assistance of the more helpless classes.

To the Orleans Railway, and to M. Polonceau, their chief engineer, is due the honour of having led the way, and of obtaining the greatest results from these liberal ideas. M. Polonceau, in daily contact with all classes of workmen and servants, did not content himself with the strict line of his duty, which would have confined his attention to the locomotives, the carriages, and the rails; nor did his humanity wait for the appeals which accidents might make to it. He early felt himself called upon to organise efficient medical aid to relieve the sufferers from accidents and illness, and, step by step, his solicitude extended itself to other objects. He has now established, for the benefit of the *employés* of his railway, in addition to a complete medical service, a fund for advances in case of sickness or misfortune, a dépôt of clothing, magazines of food, and, finally, a refectory or gigantic eating-house.

To each of the principal stations medical men are attached, who give daily consultations to such as can come to them in rooms appropriated for this purpose. Others are visited at their own homes; and to all, the medicines prescribed are delivered gratis. Workmen hurt in the service, receive, until their complete recovery, the full pay which they drew in health; and the sick are allowed two francs a day, which is about half the average amount of their wages. In the last year, 2500 persons were cared for by the medical officers of the Orleans Railway, 1900 of whom were not workmen, but members of their families. The cost of medicines and their preparation was about L.600.

The next step in this organisation of benevolence was the formation of a committee of the superior officers of the company, to visit the homes of the workmen. Each member is charged with a certain number of visits, the results of which are reported at the next meeting, when such aid as seems advisable is voted either in money or goods. 1243 families were thus visited in the winter months of 1857 and 1858, to more than half of whom succours averaging L.3 each were voted, at a total cost of more than L.2000. It is needless for us to remark that such visits do a greater good than merely relieving physical distress; nor is it the poor alone who profit by them. The moral effect of this contact of the employed with their superiors, produces a kindly feeling equally beneficial to both.

There are at the three principal stations dépôts of food and clothing, where everything that can be kept in store is laid in at wholesale prices, and, as far as possible, directly from the producers, without the intervention of brokers or middlemen. They are retailed at cost-price, with a fractional addition to pay the expenses; and the effect is, that some articles the railway servants obtain at an economy of 75 per cent. upon the usual retail price, while the average profit on all is 25 per cent. Thus, a railway servant lives for one-fourth less than other workmen, as if a fourth were actually added to his income. What is especially worthy of remark is, that these advantages are not offered as a charity, and still further are they removed from the truck-system. The company neither loses nor gains on the transaction, but it uses the immense funds at its command to place its servants in the position of members of a great wholesale firm, and this for almost every article of household consumption. The management of these dépôts is very simple. Each workman is provided with a book or *livret*, in which a sum proportioned to his daily or monthly wages is inscribed. Everything that is furnished is marked in this book, and entered in a register kept for this purpose; and when the credit is exhausted, the supply also is stopped until a fresh sum becomes due. The benefits to be derived from these magazines are by no means confined to the workmen of the three principal stations where they are established: the station-masters all along the line are authorised to forward three times a month the requisitions of the different employés under them. The orders are enclosed in a basket destined to this special service, and in which the articles required are packed, each separately addressed to the person for whom it had been asked. In 1857, L.40,000 was the cost of articles of food, and L.9000 that of the clothing supplied.

In the last place, M. Polonceau has established a kitchen or refectory at Ivry, the Paris station. It is under the care of religious women of the order of St Vincent de Paul, and is supplied with respect to articles in store from the magazines of the company, and as to meat, bread, and fresh vegetables from the Paris market. The refectory is open from seven in the morning till eight at night, and the food supplied can either be eaten there or carried away, so as to offer cheap and good cookery, not only to the workmen, but also to their families. The payments are made in counters, of which a certain number is given at a time on demand, and charged on the *livret*. When we state that an excellent dinner can be had in this refectory for 5d., including wine and bread, some of our readers will suspect us of romancing; but if we give the bill of fare, many an unfortunate writer in the *Times*, whose wife perennially starves him on roast mutton or boiled beef, will envy the better-fed workmen on the Orleans Railway. The bill of fare comprises various soups, and all kinds of butcher-meat, dressed in all ways, roast, stewed, or in ragoût; the vegetables in season—or in winter, preserved vegetables—and properly dressed, not washed in boiling water, as is the English fashion; cheese, fruits, and even preserves. For a penny, the workman can have 8 oz. of bread and 15 oz. of soup. Each portion of meat weighing about 5 oz. costs a penny, and a portion of vegetables, a halfpenny; so that a dinner comprising soup, two dishes of meat, a dish of vegetables, and half a pint of wine, will cost in all 4¾d. In eleven months, the expenditure of the refectory was L.4025, of which L.418 went for service, washing, &c. The receipts were L.4046, so that there was a profit of L.21 on the year's outlay.

No one is required to make use of the privileges offered to him; each one is at liberty to buy cheaply or not as he will; but the men have not been slow to appreciate the advantages held out to them, and the result has been all that could be desired. It has entirely put a stop to the *vie de cabaret*, pot-house life, which is the bane of the working-classes in France, as the beer-shop is their ruin in England. The men have grown domestic, and live with their families. Instead of carousing in the inn, they sit at home, or make each other visits, and indulge their hospitable feelings by offering not the *goutte* or the *verre de vin*, but chocolate.

M. Polonceau is able to conclude his report by stating that his charity is, as well-ordered charity always is, a good-paying speculation. Both the morals and the health of his men have improved, and with them the quality of their work.

This kitchen seems to us a very admirable idea. It is by no means eleemosynary, as has been shewn, and it might surely be adopted with advantage, both at the great railway stations, and in the large centres of population, such as Manchester and Sheffield. To insure success, it must be conducted on the same principles as this one at Ivry, when only one regulation is enforced, the limiting the supply of wine to one pint per meal. The good-behaviour of the visitors is trusted to themselves, and they give no cause for complaint.

NUISANCES.

Am I to become the sport of my nerves? Am I to be a slave to my senses of sight, smell, and hearing? Or am I to stand up against the encroaching power of these four secondary parts of my mental and physical organisation, and to say boldly, I will acknowledge no government but that of my head and my heart? Am I to try everything by the eternal standard of self—the everlasting me—and to ignore all that is done by my fellow-creatures, unless it happens to harmonise with my own petty tastes and feelings? Who am I, what am I, that I should set myself up as the judge of what is correct and agreeable—the putter-down and mover-on of what is improper, or repugnant to my standard of taste? What is my standard of taste? Is it something infallible—something that may be trusted under every change of circumstances, every variation of temperature, every condition of bodily feeling, or is it not rather the slave of all these things, a compound of physical weakness and mental prejudice? What right have I, a poor, weak, erring, insignificant atom upon the great earth, to sit in judgment upon anything, and call it a positive nuisance? A floor-cloth manufactory—is that a nuisance? Not absolutely or altogether so. The smell of the paint acts differently upon different constitutions; and although I cannot say that it excites in me any very agreeable sensation, I know that an open gas-pipe does, and I have a right, therefore, to assume that all men are not disgusted with a floor-cloth manufactory. Anyway, there are the work-people and their families—and no mean number of these things are to be settled by majorities—who would be sorry to hear that the nuisance which provides them with bread was put down according to act of parliament.

The fat man, with the broad, opaque back, who always sits before me in a theatre, and interferes with my personal comfort in a public conveyance, becomes at times such an intolerable nuisance, that if I were to give way to the savage impulses of my nature, I should smite him down with the first destructive instrument at hand. A little reflection, a little communion with my better humanity, convinces me, however, that he is a far greater nuisance to himself than he is to those around him, and that I am not altogether guiltless of various little acts of an annoying character by which I irritate him, and deprive myself of the pure right of complaint. At the theatre, my sharp, attenuated knees painfully penetrate his yielding back; and in the omnibus, the hard, keen angles of my pocket-book, or my snuff-box, find a resting-place in the soft substance of his incompressible sides. As I see him weltering in perspiring agony in the boiling caldron of a crowded, unventilated stage-pit—in the close, musty depths of a public vehicle—or waddling as the butt and football of every hurrying passenger on the queen's highway—my antagonism is disarmed, and I pass him tenderly, as I should one who was blind.

Slow people in the streets are nuisances, especially the two young ladies and their dowager-mamma, who will walk three abreast with a snail-like movement almost imperceptible to the naked eye. If I gave way to my feelings as I hasten to attain a given point by a certain time, I should unceremoniously break the self-complacent line of the fair promenaders, and scatter them on each side to the gutter and the wall; but a glance backward at the indignant faces of the persons whom I have rudely passed, convinces me that my haste is a greater nuisance to society at large, than the calm tardiness of the three ladies who form an elegant barrier across the footway.

The street-vendor of hardware, who stands at my area-railings with a couple of tea-trays under his arm, which it is a gross, unpardonable insult to my taste to suppose that, under any circumstances, I shall buy, appears a thorough nuisance to my one-sided vision, when he will not move on, under repeated hostile signs, which I make to him from behind the blind of my dining-room window. But if I have the heart, or take the trouble to look at the other side of this nuisance—the side that is not immediately presented to my sight—I shall see, in all probability, an anxious, struggling, itinerant trader, with a small capital, moving from house to house, in search of a humble living for the family dependent upon him. As he passes up one hard, unsympathising street, and down another, meeting with nothing but closed doors, and the eternal hasty shake of the frowning head, it may be that, in his melancholy reflections, society appears to be a greater nuisance to him than he ever appears to be to society. If I changed places with him this instant, should I conduct myself with more propriety of demeanour? should I carefully draw the line at that nice point where praiseworthy perseverance ends, and troublesome impertinence begins, with the ever-increasing cry for bread, bread, bread, ringing unceasingly in my ears?

Let any man whose nervous system is cultivated to the highest pitch of sensitiveness, try to see in the noisy huckster of the streets a fellow-labourer, whose lot has fallen upon more stony ground, and he will hear from that moment a plaintive music in the most uncouth sounds that ever issued from the lips of street-trader or street-minstrel. There will be an end to those fretful starts of impatience when the sharp, short, quick beats of the Indian tom-tom burst upon the ear, and he will learn to look with pity upon the poor copper-coloured performer who chants his wild lay in calico and a March wind. Rude and unmusical the performance may be, but not more so than Professor Gamma's illustrations of Greek harmony, to which the learned flock in crowds, and in the crabbed, four-note combinations of which they affect to discover a simple melody that is not altogether unpleasing to the ear. I have had my horror of the oriental nuisance long ago, but it fled before a day-dream picture of myself in Singapore—the temperature lowered to freezing-point, the European population rooted out, and I singing, to an unsympathising populace, for my daily food and my nightly bed, one of the wild songs of my native land.

The organ nuisance, I must say, never annoyed me, because I am not a learned and indefatigable man, like my neighbour, Dr M'Verbose, who is preparing his great work upon the currency for a not over-expectant public. He is continually calling in the assistance of the Vandal policeman to stop the *Casta Diva* abruptly in the middle, because the subtle theories of a man who is about to open up upon paper unbounded supplies of paper-wealth to pacify the insatiable hunger of the directors of a delusive commerce, cannot be properly worked out while an Italian scena is being performed upon a barrel-organ under the window, with a fluto-harmonicon accompaniment. A nuisance, no doubt, to Dr M'Verbose is that poor, pinched, dirty-faced, slouched-hatted, idiotic, smiling, nodding, mechanically-musical emigrant from the sweet south; but a far greater nuisance to a large circle is the learned doctor—even before his great work is published—without having the excuse of the Italian, that he is fighting for a living. The nuisance of the organ-player begins and ends in himself, but the nuisance of Dr M'Verbose and his theories will become multiplied in the persons of a hundred active disciples. As for me, I am content to stop for a time the working of the mental mill, and look out into the falling snow, to dream, as I listen to the melodies of the Italian composer, of a land where the people live in contented idleness under the sun, where the street-minstrel is welcomed by young and old, and not moved-on by every uncongenial hermit who dwells in the social isolation of eight rooms and a kitchen.

In nothing are men so inconsistent as in their horror of nuisances, the most sensitive being usually the greatest offenders. The hardened snuff-taker, who sneezes with the roar of a wild beast in the middle of a solemn service, will leap off his chair at the sound of a postman's knock; and the man whose nerves are irritated by the ringing of church-bells, will play complacently upon the bagpipes in the bosom of his family.

THE PEARLS.

Accept, Lezel, this simple gift,
These faintly blushing pearls;
They may have graced the syren's bower,
Or peeped from mermaid's curls.

But though from syren's coral bower,
Or mermaid's rifled hair,
They 'll not regret their late retreat,
Accepted by my fair!

If missed the sea-nymph's melting song,
When love inflames her breast,
Sweet maid, they 'll have no cause to sigh,
Allowed on thine to rest!

Thy cheek will shame the hue that tints
Their shield of softest light;
Thy beauty-moulded neck of snow
Will make them dark as night.

Kissed by thy gold-tinged chesnut hair,
Touched by thy fingers small,
Rocked in the dimples of thy breast,
They 'll smiling rise and fall.

Accept then, love, this simple gift,
These faintly blushing pearls;
That may have graced the syren's bower,
Or slept in mermaid's curls.

John Ellis.

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VIENNA DURING THE WAR.

'THE spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife, and all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,' are the sights and sounds which, from morn to dewy eve, arrest the attention of the wayfarer who saunters through Vienna's streets. It is to be inferred that English regiments, in Shakspeare's age, marched to music deeper and more harmonious than do the party-coloured host of our emperor, since the Austrian tambour gives out a very weak, harsh reverberation; and so far from spirit-stirring, it resembles nothing so much as thumping upon an old tin kettle.

One wonders whence come the multitudes of armed men that tramp, tramp along the faubourgs all day and all night long, *en route* for the railway. Along the faubourgs, I say—for though a military despotism reigns, soldiers may not march through the city, nor can the citizens be burdened with their billets, since they a long time since erected two spacious suburban barracks at their own cost, to obviate that inconvenience. In England, the Buffs only (formerly, the London Trainbands) of the whole British army, are allowed to march through London with 'drums beating and colours flying.' An exactly similar privilege is enjoyed here by the regiment of Cuirassiers, commanded by Count Ignace Hardigg, and formerly by Dampierre, who rescued the Emperor Frederic II., when, during an insurrection, he was imprisoned in his own palace. There is therefore a concentration of the military on this Wieden glacis especially, the three railway stations being not far off; and the roads all day long are literally blocked up by their marchings and counter-marchings, by batteries of artillery and baggage-trains of endless length. These wagons, marked Braten (Beef), Victualien (Food), Ambulance, &c., are strong, and perfectly well made. How unlike some three or four hundred sent out from England, which I saw during the Crimean war at the camp of Buyukdere, on the Bosphorus! Those resembled rickety carts, being painted lead colour, as if only half finished. The paint did not effectually conceal the badness of the material; but until I opened my pocket-knife, and cut deeply into shafts, spokes, felloes, and nave, I did not suspect that, one and all, they were made of the commonest deal! Just conceive the entire wheels of a vehicle destined to be rattled through rocky mountain-passes, made of the very softest known wood—and the cheapest! It was a prodigious fraud, the detection of which was, of course, no red-tapist's business. A week after, I was sent to convoy sixty of these wretched tumbrils a distance of seven miles only—the first service they had performed. We left twenty of the number in splinters by the roadside, all being more or less shaken; and some of those sent out next day to fetch home the wounded and missing, deposited themselves amongst the rocky fragments likewise, and were seen no more at head-quarters. Nothing of this sort could happen in the Austrian army.

Still, in the War department of this empire there is red-tapism enough and to spare. A hundred corruptions and mal-practices remain unaltered from year to year, merely because they are traditions of the past; princes, archdukes, and *grafs* or counts, irrespective of personal fitness and professional training, claiming, by a sort of prescriptive right, all the superior military grades. Feudalism lingers here fully as much as it did with us in the reign of our second Charles. Count Benedic is, I believe, their only general officer sprung from the citizen class, like our own lamented Havelock. Of the 25,000 commissioned officers in the service, 15,000 *only* are noble; as regards the rest, government patronage is very fairly distributed, as such matters go.

The dress, arms, and accoutrements of the Austrian troops are all first rate, and, in most instances, might serve as a model for Europe. One battalion only—picked men of each regiment—carries the complicated modern rifle-musket; the rest are armed with guns of smooth bore, but with rifle-sights; this simple construction being considered best for the rude and awkward peasant-recruit. The Austrian military tunic is for the most part white; their greatcoats also are of the same colour, which exposes them to be picked off by the enemy's riflemen, even more certainly than our own 'line of red.' In the late battle of Solferino, also at Magenta and Melegnano, this was fatally exemplified; eighteen or twenty officers, with five hundred of their men, being the amount of loss to many regiments. At this hot season, both officers and men—except when on parade—wear uniforms of brown linen, with pink cuffs and collars, an officer being distinguished by three silver stars on the collar. He has also, in many regiments, a tunic of a fine brilliantly white sort of moleskin, both the one and the other looking exceedingly cool and handsome. These linen uniforms are also most sensibly worn on a march and in the field of battle. The emperor has recently issued a general order—in imitation of the French practice—that his soldiers shall go into action 'without their packs;' instead of being nearly prostrated under the sweltering load of knapsack, greatcoat, shoes, and a haversack crammed with bread and sausages. The cream of the Austrian infantry are the Tyrolese jäger regiments, the most loyal, perhaps, of all the diverse nationalities fighting under the imperial eagles. They are ready to shed the last drop of their blood in expelling the allies from the plains of Lombardy. Yet theirs is not the blind, unreflective devotion of a Highland clan. With a keen sense of their rights as freemen, like our famous Irish volunteers of the last century, they make no secret of their intention not to lay aside their arms until Austria has conceded what will fully entitle them to bear that sacred name.

Bohemia furnishes to Austria the finest heavy cavalry of Europe. In her vast plains, the peasant-lad, employed in tending droves of wild horses, which he catches with the lasso, manages, before he is four years old, a bare-backed steed, wild as that of Mazeppa. Consequently, Bohemians dispense with the riding-master and his school, sitting like centaurs in their demi-pique saddles. Hungarians are their light horsemen. There never was a knight like the brave Magyar. The bravest of the brave—how splendid they appear in their gorgeous uniforms! There is said to be one English officer at least serving in every regiment, and well do they fraternise with their chivalrous brethren in arms. All the world is aware of the peculiar style in which the hussar wears his pelisse or over-jacket, but few know why. Many years since, Hungary was overrun by the Turks, and a large body of them suddenly surprised a Hungarian squadron of hussars early in the morning, whilst they were dressing. With one arm only in the sleeve of the pelisse, they vaulted into the saddle, and so plied their sabres, even with this incumbrance, that they drove the Turks pell-mell across a river, and nearly annihilated them. To perpetuate this dashing exploit, the Hungarian light cavalry were ordered evermore to carry their pelisses as we see them, a fashion imitated throughout Europe.

Croats or Cravats—the ancient neck-gear of whose officers has given name to that portion of dress in every European language—are an armed frontier peasantry, originally organised to keep off the Turks, and likewise their plague. They hold land by doing military service with the army in time of war, and are huge, big-boned men, but having no stamina, are laughed at by their military comrades. This comparative feebleness arises from a very amiable and unselfish cause. Being for the most part married men, they husband even their miserable regimental pay of five farthings per day, that they may carry back something to assist in giving bread to support the wife and child, in their village home. Hence, the Croat recruit is lean and lanky. 'A soldier who does not eat well,' say the Austrians, 'is not good for fighting.'

Next in estimation to the Bohemian heavy, and the Hungarian light horse, are the free jägers of Tyrol. One cannot repress a smile at the perfect self-complacency with which certain persons in England seem to regard the formation of a corps of riflemen as the result of some few months' drill. The rifleman of the Tyrol is trained to his favourite weapon from boyhood. As soon as he can hold it straight, it forms his constant companion. He is a hunter born. In that thinly peopled, rocky land, targets, formed of a slice sawn off from the trunk of some ancient pine, may be safely fixed almost anywhere. The sharp crack of his rifle is heard there each evening towards sundown; the falcon's head and neck dried, and the beard of the chamois—trophies of his marksmanship—are worn in the hat of every Tyrolese chasseur; and these singular decorations, it may be remarked, are exhibited in numbers in every hatter's shop in Vienna.

The hunter of the chamois starts on his dangerous enterprise by night, in order that he may reach those mountain pastures, where, at break of day, the chamois comes to feed, ere the shepherd brings his flock there. Having espied his game from afar, he climbs from one rocky pinnacle to another to get above it; and in approaching it, he creeps along some friendly ravine, or hides behind a cliff. When got sufficiently near to discern the animal's horns, by which he knows he is within rifle distance, he rests his piece upon a rock, adjusts his aim with perfect coolness, and rarely misses. The gun is a rifled carabine, often double, though the barrel itself is a single one, the two being placed one above the other. I have just seen one of this remarkable construction for sale in Vienna. If the chamois falls, he runs to his prey, and makes sure of him by the *coup de grâce* with his hunting-knife. He then looks about, reconnoitring the road by which to regain his native village. If the way be difficult, he skins the chamois, taking only his hide; but if the road be practicable, he hoists his game upon his shoulders, and bears it with him, often great distances, to his home. Sometimes, on the other hand, the vigilant animal, perceiving the approach of the hunter, flies with extraordinary swiftness, and halts only upon the most inaccessible rocks. Here begin the fatigues of the hunter, which accustom him to the long marches, the spare diet, and all other accidents of a military service that await him. Night often overtakes him in the very midst of his pursuit, but he still holds on, knowing that what stops him also stops the chamois. He therefore settles himself down for the night, not at the foot of a tree, as does the hunter of the plain, but at the bottom of a rock, or upon a heap of stones, where there is not the smallest shelter from a storm. There, without fire or light, after a very frugal supper, he falls asleep, dreaming of the path the chamois has taken. Awakened at day-dawn by the fresh morning air, he rises from his hard couch, shivering with cold, shoulders his game-bag and his rifle, and after a small dram of brandy, hurries off with undiminished energy to renew the chase.

Such is the training of that corps of sharpshooters which form the pride of the Austrian army. Francis Joseph himself commands the 1st regiment, consisting of 7000 men. In Italy, they were opposed to the French *Chasseurs de Vincennes*, yet no victory ever crowned the Austrian arms. Those same chasseurs, with perhaps the Tyrolese also, would, be it remembered, in case of invasion, be opposed to our raw levies.

How thoroughly contemptuous and neglectful is the behaviour of the military despot ruling this country to his subjects! First of all, he addresses to the army only, his proclamation announcing the armistice and preliminaries of peace, which Queen Victoria would have announced to her people through the parliament. Next, he comes back to Luxemburg, a palace about the same distance from Vienna as Windsor from London, and there remains in strict seclusion, never deigning to visit his metropolis, and shew himself to his lieges. To be sure, he wears no laurels. From his first and last essay at the generalship of 290,000 men, have resulted the almost immediate defeat of the centre of that vast host, and the slaughter of nearly 20,000 men. After the battle of Magenta, General Gyulai was made the scape-goat. He fell into disgrace, was displaced from command, and retired to Baden, a little watering-place near this city. The officers and soldiers of the garrison abused and cursed him publicly in every *café* and *gasthaus*. Yet how stands the truth? The ignorant interference of the emperor, who sent a peremptory order to stop his division when marching into the field, was alone to blame. The order being delivered by Hess, his superior officer, he of course obeyed. Hess detained him at a council of war for four hours. During that interval, Magenta was lost. The French, Sardinians, and Piedmontese, had been repulsed on all sides; Gyulai's timely arrival would have secured victory, more glorious to the Austrian arms than that of Aspern, for Napoleon and his whole Guard were at one time in extreme jeopardy; and there would have been perhaps a live French emperor for the Viennese to make a Sunday lion of, a prisoner of war in some one of the imperial palaces, everywhere thrown open to the public on that day.

Talking of prisoners of war, I must not omit to mention the curious fact, of an army everywhere beaten in the field, without having gained a single advantage, ostentatiously sending home a batch of captive French, Sardinians, and Piedmontese. They must have been deserters, or picked up as stragglers from time to time, although a telegraphic dispatch published in the Austrian journals, announces that 'we (the Austrians) have prisoners from almost every regiment of the allied army,' and closes with its invariably mendacious assertion, that 'although the enemy was greatly superior, we retired in excellent order.' So regularly ends the last paragraph of every official dispatch. Did an editor dare to make a comment, venture upon a surmise, or print an authentic letter from soldier or officer present in the camp? he and his journal would be soon amongst the things that are not. There are no leading articles, and every intended paragraph, after being put in type, is sent to a chief of the press, of whom there are many: one for the Aulic Council, one for the Foreign Office, and a third for the Internal Department. Should the paragraph or letter be sufficiently guarded and palatable, it is returned, otherwise certain paragraphs are struck out, and others substituted; but usually they suppress it altogether. I have been introduced to one of these *chefs*. I found him in his bureau, surrounded by piles of foreign papers of every nation, amongst which the broadsheet of the *Times* appeared conspicuous. I fancied myself in the hall of an inquisitor. The politics of a certain new English paper were being canvassed. He expressed a great wish to see a number, and declared himself much comforted by my report of the general dislike to Louis Napoleon entertained by all classes of Englishmen. He had thought, on the contrary, that the emperor was but too popular.

But to return to the war-prisoners—about 700. They were marched from the northern station to Franz Joseph's *caserne*, destined for their temporary prison. A great crowd marched with them through the streets, and remained in the open space in front of the barrack, which is a splendid castellated brick building, nearly a quarter of a mile in length. The prisoners soon appeared at the open windows, some of them sitting on the window-sill with their legs hanging outwards. The people called out to them to let down some means of receiving their little contributions. Soon a score or two of lines formed of braces, pocket-handkerchiefs knotted together, sashes, turbans, pantaloons torn to strips, and fragments of twine, were fluttering in the breeze, each with a bag at its extremity. The good-natured citizens quickly filled them over and over again with such modest dainties as sausages, cheese, eggs, a little coffee and sugar, cherries, of which large quantities are brought into Vienna; with pipes, bundles of cigars, bread, &c. One little boy contributed a single roll of fine bread, given him probably for his own supper. One solitary can of beer reached its destination safely; a wonder, considering the frail material by which they drew it up. At last a Piedmontese, with grateful gestures, exclaimed: 'Friends, we thank you; we have enough to eat, but suffer intense thirst.' Immediately exertions are on foot to relieve this want also. Then an Austrian soldier on guard in one of the rooms, leaning his body out of the window, exclaimed, as he threw his arm around the neck of a French non-commissioned officer: 'See, I have crossed bayonets with this man in the field of battle; he was then my enemy; he is now a prisoner, and I embrace him as a friend and brother; make for him a little collection.' There was a murmur of applause; a score of lads went about with their caps, to receive contributions. The *kreuzers*, or farthings, were rattling merrily when suddenly, as if springing from the ground, a hated commissary of police made his appearance; at his signal, the numerous sentinels drove back the multitude with their muskets. Two men with bayonets marched up to a young man who held his cap, and walked him off to prison, while the commissary's myrmidons arrested the boys. The soldier-orator, the cause of all this movement, no doubt paid dearly for his eloquence; and later in the evening, an excited Italian, who publicly remarked that the people need not regret that the French were victorious, since they brought freedom in their march, was seized immediately, and carried off by a guard. I shrewdly suspect this indiscreet patriot will never again quaff a cup of Hungarian wine in any gasthaus of Vienna or elsewhere. The populace shewed no sign, remaining dumb as fishes. They are better drilled in what the Austrian government terms the maintenance of public order—that is, they have a craven terror of the police. Ask a gentleman if it be true that the emperor has arrived at Vienna from the army, as reported. 'Sir,' he responds, 'I cannot tell; it is dangerous to talk of such matters.' I once conversed about the battle of Magenta in a rather high tone to a native friend, because, in the great thoroughfares, the loose axle-trees of public vehicles almost drown conversation. He evidently got uneasy, cast hasty glances right and left over his shoulder, and then fore and aft, as seamen term it. At last, he burst forth with: 'Monsieur, excusez, mais il ne faut pas crier comme ça, dans les rues; c'est dangereuse.' Off he shuffled without leave-taking, and plunged into a café close at hand. I dived after him, but passing through the crowd, he had bolted by the opposite door.

The wounded at Solferino are flocking into the city. I meet them everywhere in my walks about the faubourgs, pale, halting, and their heads and arms bound up with bandages. A Viennese surgeon directs my attention to the great proportion injured in their arms and hands only, but is not able to explain the peculiarity, unless by attributing their hurts to sabre cuts. A tall Hungarian grenadier, in his graceful uniform, light-blue tight pantaloons, and ankle-laced boots—the men have, almost without exception, slender ankles, and uncommonly well-shaped feet—is slowly creeping towards me, his emaciated frame supported by a stick. Just at the same moment arrives, with wicker-basket on her arm, one of those jolly-looking grisettes forming a very remarkable class in Vienna, but who herself evidently belongs to some rustic suburban locality, more favourable to the development of female charms. She wears the usual coquettish jerkin with short skirts, and her nether garments, unconscious of bustle or crinoline, are plaited and fashioned after a mode peculiarly their own. The hair of most German women is superb, and that of a Vienna grisette yields not to that of the first princess in the land; they wear no bonnets, but carry a tiny parasol as a defence from the ardour of the sun, that 'kisses all he meets,' and thus their dark, luxuriant, well-oiled tresses are always seen to the best advantage. One of these bonny lasses finds herself opposite the maimed Hungarian. She stops short, and her broad, good-tempered visage expands into an expression of the most intense sympathy. A hand mechanically slips through her pocket-hole, and withdraws a handsome French purse, which the grisettes, and even the soldiers, always carry to keep their farthings in. Selecting a six-kreuzer piece—a coin of old bell-metal plated with silver—she gently slips it into his palm, and then, with gaze oft turned back upon the object of her commiseration, hurries off to execute her mistress's errands. Never do I remember to have seen the parable of the good Samaritan more beautifully illustrated than in the unostentatious charity of the pretty grisette.

The emperor Francis Joseph is now in his Vienna palace. He looked deadly pale, and the *Kaiserin*, or empress, shed abundance of tears on that day, fatal for his army, when he started for the camp. His appearance has not been improved by the fatigues of war endured under an Italian sun. The world knows but a small portion of what took place at that memorable interview between the emperors in that eight hours at Villafranca. One fact, however, I can vouch for—ever since the publication of the armistice, there has been no cessation, but rather an increase of activity in the war department. The railways are wholly monopolised; artillery, horses, and military supplies of all sorts block up the stations, and are despatched to Italy by every train. This looks strangely. The only troops who came back were two or three Italian regiments—runaways—who arrived at dusk, and with about threescore of their comrades disarmed in the centre, were marched off with bayonets fixed, to the barracks, no music sounding. The men in the middle were actual mutineers—the whole regiment little better—who had refused to fire when brought face to face with the allies at Solferino. With such elements of discord in its ranks, can it be wondered at that the Austrian army should have been always worsted?

The government is said to be exceedingly savage with ours. It is confidently asserted here that Napoleon meditates an immediate collision with us, and that part of the secret conference at Villafranca was an alliance to that end. The Austrians here are giving the English the cold shoulder already; every Viennese of any intelligence speaks of a French descent upon Great Britain as the next great move on the imperial chess-board. We trust that the 'Parvenu Ludwig,' as an Austrian caricature calls him, will find himself checkmated.

NOTHING LOST.

When Lord Palmerston was Home Secretary, under Lord John Russell's premiership, he had to attend to sanitary reform, and to many other subjects far removed from the foreign diplomacy with which his name is more especially connected. While so engaged, he propounded an aphorism which is excellent both for its epigrammatic neatness and for its truth: 'Dirt is only matter in the wrong place!' If society would duly act upon this truth, we should save millions a year; if, instead of considering dirt and refuse, sweepings and cuttings, scourings and washings, to be valueless, we could only bring ourselves to believe that they are good things in wrong places, we should be better both in health and in pocket than we are now. Practical chemists have long known this; medical men not unfrequently impress the fact on their patients; patentees of new inventions often shew an appreciation of it; and the world is getting wiser thereon every day. A few months after the close of the Great Exhibition of 1851, Dr Lyon Playfair gave a lecture on some of the results of that wonderful display, taking for his principal topic the recent advances in industrial chemistry. The production of perfumes was not the least curious of these examples. The lecturer shewed that beautiful perfumes are now produced from the most trivial, and often from the most fetid and repulsive substances. If this were all, it would be a triumph of chemistry, and a benefit to mankind; but, unfortunately, the crooked commercial morality with which we are all too much acquainted, stepped in, and encouraged a system of cheating and deception. It is scientific to obtain from decayed or unsightly refuse a perfume similar in odour to that obtained from a beautiful fruit or flower; but it is dishonest to call it by the name of that fruit or flower, and to charge a high price accordingly. 'A peculiar fetid oil,' said Dr Playfair, 'termed fusel oil, is formed in making brandy and whisky; this fusel oil, distilled with sulphuric acid and acetate of potash, gives the "oil of pears." The "oil of apples" is made from the same fusel oil, by distillation with sulphuric acid and bichromate of potash. The "oil of pine-apples" is obtained from a product of the action of putrid cheese on sugar, or by making a soap with butter, and distilling it with alcohol and sulphuric acid; and is now largely employed in England in making "pine-apple ale." "Oil of grapes" and "oil of cognac," used to impart the flavour of French cognac to British brandy, are little else than fusel oil. The artificial "oil of bitter almonds," now so largely employed in perfuming soap and for flavouring confectionary, is prepared by the action of nitric acid on the fetid oils of gas-tar. Many a fair forehead is damped with "Eau de Millefleurs," without knowing that its essential ingredient is derived from the drainage of cow-houses.'

But without dwelling further at present on the roguery involved in all such misnomers and masked substitutions, let us glance at some among the almost innumerable examples of honest utilisation of substances which used formerly to be denominated waste, or were at most regarded as possessing scarcely any appreciable value. Dr Lyon Playfair adverted to some of these examples: 'The clippings of the travelling tinker are mixed with the parings of horses' hoofs from the smithy, or the cast-off woollen garments of the inhabitants of the sister-isle, and soon afterwards, in the form of dyes of brightest blue, grace the dress of courtly dames. The main ingredient of the ink with which I now write was possibly once part of a broken hoop of an old beer-barrel. The bones of dead animals yield the chief constituent of lucifer-matches. The dregs of port-wine—carefully rejected by the port-wine drinker in decanting his favourite beverage—are taken by him in the morning, in the form of Seidlitz powders, to remove the effects of his debauch. The offal of the streets and the washings of coal-gas reappear carefully preserved in the lady's smelling-bottle, or are used by her to flavour "blanc mange" for her friends.' Very recently, this highly interesting subject has been traced throughout a much wider range by Mr P. L. Simmonds, an experienced authority on all that relates to the materials for manufactures. In a paper read before the Society of Arts, he gave a wonderful variety of instances of the utilisation of apparently unimportant substances. A bare enumeration of them would be beyond our limits; but it will be seen that—even leaving out all that concerns the devising of new forms of food for human beings, all that concerns the discovery of new fibrous substances for paper-making, and all the schemes for making town-sewage available as agricultural manure—the variety is very remarkable.

Beginning with animal substances, and with such parts of them as belong to the skin, hair, and wool, we find that the skin of the dog-fish is used to make an abrading substance analogous to sand-paper. Eel-skin is made by the Americans into ropes and whip-lashes. Sole-skin is used to refine coffee and other liquids, in the manner of isinglass. Porpoise and walrus skins are tanned into shoe-leather. Alligator-skin is tanned by the Texans into leather much resembling fine calf. Snake-skin is dressed to imitate shagreen. Old boots and shoes are 'vamped' up, in Monmouth Street and in Petticoat Lane, the fractures doctored with 'clobber,' made of ground cinders and paste, and a little further life of usefulness given to them. In Yorkshire, there are 'waste-dealers,' who buy up all the odds and ends from the woollen factories, and sell it to 'shoddy' mill-owners at Leeds, Dewsbury, and Batley. These mill-owners work up the refuse wool into 'shoddy' or 'mungo,' mix it with a little new wool, and spin and weave it into broadcloth, doeskins, pilot-cloths, druggets, coarse carpeting, baize, and table-covers. Woollen rags, however dirty, are bought up, torn to shreds, cleaned, made into an inferior shoddy, and wrought into the cheapest kinds of pilot-cloths, beaverteens, Petershams, mohairs, Talmas, Raglans, paletots, and other superbly named woollen fabrics. It is said that Leeds alone reproduces from rags as much wool annually as would represent the fleeces of four hundred thousand sheep. These rags may be the relics of worn-out clothing, tailors' cuttings, old worsted stockings, carpeting, &c.; and there are large quantities imported from abroad, in aid of our home-supply. A small portion, when ground up, makes flock-paper for paper-hangers; and another portion, chiefly carpet-waste, is used to stuff mattresses, and also as an ingredient in the manufacture of Prussian blue. All the delicate materials for ladies' dresses, known by the names of balzarines, Orleans, Coburgs, alpacas, &c., are now imitated by mixtures of wool and cotton, although they may originally have been really wool or worsted. These mixtures, when decayed by long wear to the state of rags, undergo a metempsychosis; chemicals are employed to destroy the cotton, and the residue is worked up with a little new wool into cloth. It is within the region of fair probability that some of the wool in a lady's balzarine dress this year, may form part of her husband's overcoat twelve months hence. Cow-hair is used in making mortar, felt, ropes, carpets, and various substitutes for horsehair. And when the ingenuity of man can find no further manufacturing uses for the above varied animal substances, the farmer is always ready to buy them as manure; 2¼ pounds of woollen rags are said to contain as much fertilising power as 100 pounds of farm-yard manure.

Turning, next, to the skeleton and the inner portion of animals, the value derived from trifles is not less remarkable. Of bones, the best parts are worked up into handles for knives, &c.; into articles of turnery; and into numerous useful productions. Some portions are used to make bone-black or animal charcoal; others are boiled to extract size for dyers and cloth-finishers; and all the rest are ground up into manure for farmers. The almost incredible sum of L.800,000 is said to be paid annually in England for bones. Horns and hoofs are used for so many purposes that it would be scarcely possible to enumerate them; many valuable chemical substances are obtained from these sources. Whalebone cuttings and shavings are used for stuffing cushions, &c., for fire-grate ornaments, and for yielding Prussian blue. Dog-fat is used to prepare kid-gloves at Paris, and is also made to yield an oil used as a cheap—perhaps fraudulent—substitute for cod-liver oil. Wool-scourers' waste, in which tallow or fat of some kind is always an ingredient, is now made to give up the wherewithal for stearine candles. The blood of slaughtered animals is used in sugar-refining, in making animal charcoal, in producing the once-famous Turkey-red dye, and in many other ways. The bile or gall of the ox is used as a detergent for wool or cloth; as a medicine; and by painters for cleaning ivory tablets used in miniatures, for fixing chalk and pencil drawings, and for mixing with certain colours. Fishes' scales are used for bracelets and ornaments, and fishes' eyes for undeveloped buds in artificial flower-making. Butchers' and knackers' offal is cooked up in such modes as to be acceptable as food to cats and dogs. Bladders and intestines are prepared into the cases for sausages and such like articles of food; into water-tight coverings for jars and apothecaries' vessels; into strings for violins and guitars; and into the beautiful membrane named (somewhat equivocally) 'gold-beaters' skin.' The French buy our old written parchments, and return them to us in the form of delicate kid gloves. All the odds and ends of skin and parchment of every kind are 'grist to the mill' of the glue manufacturer. Calf's feet are boiled down to yield neat's-foot oil for leather-dressing; and sheep's feet to yield trotter-oil, not unknown to our makers of hair-oil. Fish garbage, whether at our fishing-stations or at markets such as Billingsgate, is always saleable as manure. Last autumn, one particular shoal of herrings off Lowestoft was so enormously beyond the wants of herring-eaters, that the fishers sold the fish to the farmers at 4s. 6d. per *ton!* Many a fine field of hops in Kent has been rendered fertile by a manure of sprats and old woollen rags.—One more example of the utilisation of animal substances we cannot resist the temptation to mention. There are certain small brown domestic annoyances which tidy housewives cannot endure to hear even named, and which have received the masquerading designation of 'B flats.' Now, Australia has the misfortune to be very prolific in these B flats; and an enterprising colonist has devised the means of obtaining a useful brown dye from them. Knowing as we do what kind of red dye is obtainable from the cochineal insect, we have no difficulty in believing this statement concerning another small individual. The colonist will be a real 'blessing to mothers,' and to households in general, if he succeeds in using up this peculiar material.

It would be scarcely possible, even if worth while, to determine whether the animal or the vegetable kingdom furnishes the larger amount of useful refuse; suffice it to say, that the vegetable contributions are almost endless in variety. Let us begin with the fibres, the great material for textile clothing. When the cotton-spinners are engaged in working up the hundreds of millions of pounds of cotton which our Liverpool and Glasgow merchants buy yearly, there are five kinds of waste which become scattered about the mill—'strippings,' 'flyings,' 'droppings,' 'blowings,' and 'sweepings;' all are carefully collected, not only for the sake of health and cleanliness in the work-rooms, but because they have a money value. The 'cotton-waste dealers' will give for the strippings and flyings about one-half or two-thirds the value of new cotton; and for the other three kinds, a price about one-eighth or one-tenth of the original value. It is supposed that there is little less than 50,000 tons of this waste produced in Great Britain annually; it is worked up into coarse sheeting and bed-covers, or is sold to the manufacturers of printing-paper, to be mixed with linen rags. In the United States, the cotton waste is worked up into papier-mâché for tea-trays and other articles. Linen rags, besides their more prominent use in paper-making, are largely made into lint for surgeons during war-time. Coir, the fibrous husk of the cocoa, is employed as a material for matting, sacking, rope, and other articles, especially where a power of resisting the attacks of insects is needed. Moss, from the woods of the Mississippi regions, is extensively used for making the bags or bales in which cotton is shipped; and when this service has been rendered, paper-making affords a further resource. Sea-weed is employed in France for a great variety of purposes: it is made into paper; it is used as a lining material for ceilings and walls, on account of its incombustible properties and its power of resisting vermin; and it is employed by manufacturing chemists as a substance whence iodine and acetic acid can be obtained.

The minor uses of the numerous other components of the vegetable world are singularly varied. Rape-seed, linseed, and cotton-seed, after the oil has been pressed out of them, present the form of husky cakes, which, both in themselves, and in the portion of oil which they still contain, are valuable as cattle-food, for which they have very fattening qualities. It affords a curious instance of the discreditable adulterating practices of our day, that there are many factories in which the husks and refuse of rice are worked up into a substance called 'shude,' sold in thousands of tons, to adulterate oil-cake, to which it is made to bear a considerable resemblance—wanting, however, in the oleaginous properties of the latter. Grape-husks, when charred, are employed in making the intensely black ink with which bank-notes are printed. The raisin stalks and skins which accumulate on the hands of British wine-makers form the very best filter for the use of vinegar-manufacturers; and hence arises a certain advantage in carrying on both those processes in one establishment, as is done by the celebrated firm of Beaufoy at Vauxhall. Rice-husks, and the delicate pellicle which encloses the grain, are largely employed as a litter for stables, as a substitute for saw-dust, and as a food for live-stock and poultry. The bran or refuse from the grinding and bolting of corn is useful as a food for cattle, as a material in tanning, as a cleanser in calico-printing and tin-plate making, and as a stuffing for cushions and dolls. Brewers' and distillers' grains are much sought after as fattening food for live-stock. The bread-raspings from rolls and from over-baked loaves are used as a coating for hams, and in some districts by poor persons as a substitute for coffee. In Paris, such of these raspings as have been carbonised to blackness are pounded, sifted, and sold as tooth-powder. Beet-root fibre, after the root has had the juice pressed from it for sugar-making, is eagerly bought by the continental farmers as a fertiliser; while the skinnings from the boiling of the sugar are added to the food for cattle. This same sort of fibre will work up well with other substances as a material for paper, and for papier-mâché tea-trays, &c. The 'trash' or fibre of the sugar-cane, after the juice is expelled, is used by the West India planters as fuel; although chemists tell them that it still contains a great deal of valuable sugar, which might be more profitably applied. The molasses which are left as a residue in beet-root sugar-making can be distilled to yield a spirit, and then made to yield a useful amount of potash. Tan-pit refuse, a complex mixture with much vegetable and a little animal substance, is employed in hot-houses and forcing-stoves, and also for making a peculiar kind of charcoal. Maize, in America, besides supplying an important article of food for man, is brought into requisition in a great variety of ways: the grain is made to yield a spirit and an oil; the stalk has sugar and molasses extracted from it; the cob is an acceptable food for cattle; and the husk is employed for packing oranges and cigars, for stuffing mattresses, for making paper, and as a cheap substitute for horsehair. The cuttings of cork are used as a piston-packing for steam-engines, as a stuffing for beds and pillows, as a buoyant material for safety-boats and garments, and —when mixed with asphalt—as a road-material for suspension-bridges; the elegant new suspension-bridge at Battersea Park furnishes an example of the last-named kind. Rotten potatoes, damaged grain, and refuse rice, are sources whence excellent starch is obtained. Horse-chestnuts, which used to be valueless, except as an occasional food for sheep, are now ground, mixed with a little carbonate of soda, to neutralise the bitter principle, washed to whiteness, and employed in making meal, starch, vermicelli, and macaroni. The brick-tea made from the spiked leaves and stalks of the tea-plant, is a cheap and portable substitute for regular tea; but the lie-tea, made from the refuse of the tea-plantations, and from the sweepings of the Hong storehouses at Canton, is too often sold as an unfair adulterant. Acorns are roasted and ground for coffee in France. Malt 'commings,' the refuse of the kiln, is one of the too numerous adulterants of coffee, while as a more honest application, it is a valuable manure. Pea-shells are carried in van-loads from Covent Garden Market to the dairies in the vicinity of the metropolis, as a food for milch-cows; in France, they are made to yield a little spirit by distillation, and are used also in paper-making. Saw-dust and shavings have a multiplicity of useful applications: from mahogany, they are used in smoking fish; from boxwood, in cleaning jewellery; from cedar, in making 'otto of cedar-wood;' from sandal-wood, in filling scent-bags; from deal, in packing bottles, and ice, in stuffing dolls, cleansing metals, and sprinkling floors. Tobacco-ashes, procured by burning damaged tobacco in the custom-house kiln or 'Queen's Tobacco-pipe' at the London Docks, are sold to tooth-powder makers. In Savoy, walnuts are pressed for walnut-oil; and the residue oil-cake is eaten by children and poor persons. Palm-oil, which is shipped to the extent of 50,000 tons annually from the west coast of Africa, for the manufacture of soap and candles, is made from a pellicle which surrounds the nut or kernel: this kernel used to be thrown away as a useless residue; but another kind of oil is now expressed from it. It has been estimated that there must be 10,000,000 bushels of nuts to yield the 50,000 tons of palm-oil; that the kernels from this enormous quantity ought to yield the more delicate oil—something like cocoa-nut oil—to the value of L.3,000,000 annually; and that there would remain 112,000 tons of oil-cake, worth L.500,000 as cattle-food.

Turn we finally to the mineral kingdom, which presents its own peculiar list of 'waste' or refuse now applied to useful purposes. The screenings and siftings at our coal-pits, once allowed to remain valueless, are now become a marketable commodity, either by themselves, or mixed with other substances to form artificial fuel. At the gas-works, after the gas and the coke have been made from coal, there are many residual substances which, in the early history of the manufacture, were regarded as troublesome encumbrances; but now they nearly all become useful. From the liquid left in some of the pipes are manufactured sulphate of ammonia for manure, sal-ammoniac for soldering and for calico-printing, ammonia for dyers, and as one component in orchil and cudbear. A kind of oil useful as manure is obtained from the shale of the coal. Coal-tar (of which 300,000 tons are among the annual residue of our gas-works) is used in the preparation of printers' ink, lamp-black, asphaltic composition for pavements, disinfectants, artificial fuel, and for yielding a magnificent straw-colour dye for silk. There were days when naphtha, now used for artificial illumination, benzole, now used as a lubricator, and paraffine, now used for a variety of purposes, were all thrown away as waste. Ashes and small cinders form a well-known ingredient in bricks; and soot is worth sixpence per bushel as manure, even if chemists make no use of it for the charcoal it contains. Argol, the sediment of wine-casks, is imported to the extent of a thousand tons yearly; when purified into 'cream of tartar,' it is used as a medicine, and also as a mordant by dyers. One thousand tons of broken bottles, instead of being thrown away, are, in London alone, yearly consigned to the glass-furnace, to commence a new career of usefulness. Horseshoe nails, picked up by the grubbers about the streets, and the scraps of steel from needle-factories, are eagerly bought up by the Birmingham gunmakers, as the best of all materials for the barrels of muskets and rifles. Steel-pen waste is bought back by the Sheffield steel-makers at L.10 per ton; Birmingham brass-filings fetch half the value of new brass; and steel-filings are valuable to chemists and apothecaries. Jewellers' and goldbeaters' sweepings are rated at a very high value; the sweepings of the benches and floors are always preserved for sale; the clothing and aprons have a sufficient number of particles of gold in and about them to give them a marketable value; the older they are, of course, the better. A goldbeater can generally obtain a new waistcoat for an old one; and sometimes a *very* old waistcoat will be bought by a refiner at a price almost fabulous. In all such cases, everything extraneous is burnt away, leaving precious gold as a residue. Tin-plate cuttings, in hundreds of tons, are awaiting the result of experiments now being made to separate the tin from the iron, and thus render both again serviceable; meanwhile, the scraps are applied to a few useful purposes. The old-iron shops, which are supplied by dustmen, street-grubbers, mud-larks, and other persons, in their turn supply the captains of American ships with battered and broken old kettles, sauce-pans, frying-pans, gridirons, candlesticks, tea-trays, shovels, boilers, corrugated roofing, &c.; these odds and ends serve as a cheap kind of ballast for ships going away with light cargoes.

Enough. Readers of any experience could easily add to this curious list of proofs that nothing is valueless—that there is good in everything.

MY FIRST BALL.

To most young ladies, their first ball is an event of no ordinary importance: it is the limit between an old life and a new one. With the first ball—the first ball of grown-up people, I mean, for children's parties do not count—there is an end of school-girldom, and young ladydom begins. Henceforth, the reign of dolls, pinafores, and skipping-ropes absolutely ceases. The school-mistress or governess resigns, and the chaperone enters upon the scene. Miss is no longer sent to bed regularly at ten o'clock every night: her days are no longer employed in the study of geography, history, and French grammar; she writes no more exercises; and of all the occupations that have hitherto engaged her, one alone remains; she still 'practises,' as it is called, she still, to the distraction of the neighbours, sits strumming upon her piano for a certain number of hours every day; nor is it until a considerable period of time has past over that she is emancipated from that particular serfdom. But in all other respects, her life has changed. Of course, then, the young lady looks forward to her first ball with no small amount of flutter and pleasing anxiety. She wonders how she will like it, what sort of partners she will get, how often she will be asked to dance, and whether she is to be allowed to polk and waltz, or not. Long and serious are the reflections upon the great question of dress; ceaseless is the shopping, and innumerable are the messages to and from the milliner. The female part of the young lady's family are in their glory. Mamma looks back a long way through the bygone years, thinks complacently of her own entry into society, and lives the past over again in her daughter. Papa, who is not at all romantic, but, on the contrary, rather matter of fact, looks upon the whole proceeding as a mere excuse for making pecuniary demands upon him, and is somewhat inclined to grumble beforehand at the milliner's bill. The great evening at last arrives. Miss is duly arrayed in her new ball attire; the servants come up stairs in a body to admire her before she sets out, and at last she drives off, full of expectation, to make her entrance into the world.

But leaving this young lady to begin the series of triumphs which, I hope, awaits her, I shall come at once to my own experiences. I ought to be ashamed of the confession, perhaps, which possibly would come more fitly from one of the gentler sex; but, nevertheless, I must honestly avow that I, too, look back upon my first ball as on one of the events of my life. I never was fond of what is called Society. At one period of my life, indeed, and more especially at that of which I am now speaking, some short time after I had ceased to be a school-boy, this dislike amounted almost to a disease. I positively shuddered at the notion of going into and forming a part of any large assembly. The hospitable invitation which first informed me that Mrs A. requested the pleasure of my company, filled me with anything but delight, although, under the strong pressure that was brought to bear upon me, I hypocritically declared, in my neatest handwriting, that Mr B. had great pleasure in accepting Mrs A.'s invitation. I had struggled against this, I had wished to send an apology, I was resolved to be unwell; but those who had a right to guide me were very properly determined that there should be no apology, that I should be in rude health, and that I should go to Mrs A.'s party. The flutter I was in was fully equal to that of any young lady such as I have spoken of; there was this difference, however, that hers is a flutter of impatience and delight, mine was one of dislike and fear. Day after day went on, much too fast to please me; and far sooner than I liked, the dreaded evening came. I dressed in a sulk, I oiled my hair in a passion, and put on my dress-coat in a fury. No fortunate accident happened to my evening attire, and at the proper moment, I was perfectly ready to step into the vehicle that was to convey me to what every one but myself considered a scene of pleasure. I was, however, conducted in perfect safety to Mrs A.'s door. My driver knocked, as the custom is upon such occasions, thunderingly, although the hall-door had only just closed upon some prior arrival as we drove up. I left my cab, and walked into the hall. I gave up my hat unresistingly, and immediately lost the pasteboard ticket which was given me in exchange for it. Of course, I would have tea or coffee; of course, I would have or do anything that would delay my entry into the room upstairs. But of what avail was taking tea or coffee? I had imagined that the room in which those stimulants were being served out would be perfectly empty, but for the one or two servants engaged in performing that duty, and I therefore counted on having five minutes of solitude and tranquillity, during which I might collect my scattered senses before facing the enemy. But taking tea or coffee were six young ladies and three young gentlemen, forming two or three different little parties, who had come a short time before me, and were chatting and laughing with each other in a low tone of voice. To find so many persons where I had expected to find no one at all, did not add to my comfort, and leaving the room as fast as I had entered it, I bravely began to ascend the stairs, and, hardly knowing what I did, mechanically gave my name to the servant who stood at the drawing-room door, as soon as he asked for it. For a moment, I stood stupidly expecting what would come next, when the servant, who I must have imagined had asked for my name merely to gratify some private curiosity of his own, horrified me by loudly proclaiming it, and immediately standing aside, made way for me to pass into the room. I walked in, literally not knowing whether I stood upon my head or my heels, and felt, rather than heard or saw, that a lady was bidding me welcome. Then I recollected who the lady was, and as I had the pleasure of being pretty intimately acquainted with her, I felt a little relieved, and was able to stammer out some commonplace remark. If I could have monopolised my hostess, all would have been well for a while at least, but scarcely had I begun to speak to her, when the voice of the servant again resounded. Mr Blank and the Misses Blank were announced as sonorously as I myself had been, and the lady of the house of course stepped forward to receive her new guests. What on earth was I to do with myself now? Look where I would, I saw no friend or acquaintance. Dresses, white, blue, and pink, were ranged along the walls; that they were dresses, I knew; that in those dresses there were human beings, it would have been impossible for me at the moment either to assert or to deny. There was not even a vacant corner to which I might retire and conceal myself. There I stood, like the fool in the middle at the children's game of 'Four Corners,' afraid either to advance or to retreat, and of course imagining, as people will do under such circumstances, that every one was criticising each movement I made. At last, as little by little my senses came back to me, I espied standing at the furthest end of the room two young gentlemen, one of whom was about my own age, and the other some two or three years older. The two were chatting very unconcernedly, and recognising an acquaintance in the younger of them, I took my courage, as the French say, in my two hands, and advanced across the room to join him. He received me cavalierly enough, and descrying the traces of my trouble in my manner, began indelicately to 'chaff' me upon my want of experience of the world. He was himself, if anything, younger than I; we had long been together at the same school, where I had always been his superior alike in the class-room and in the play-ground. Yet here he was on his proper ground: he had been out at half-a-dozen balls before that which I am describing, had picked up at them no small amount of assurance, and seemed now to be upon perfectly good terms with himself. Indeed, he appeared to consider himself a finished man of the world, and looking upon me as a mere raw novice, treated me with a mixture of pleasant banter and condescending patronage.

Anywhere else, I should have resented this behaviour on this young gentleman's part, but I was now only too glad to bear with anything, that I might have some one that I knew to speak with. But even the dreary comfort of being the butt of my friend's sarcasms did not last long; he speedily recognised at the other end of the room a young lady, who, as he hurriedly explained, was 'a regular brick of a girl,' walking with a coolness which I envied, but could not have imitated for worlds, across the room, was soon deep in conversation with the fair one that he had so strikingly eulogised. Thus I was again flung on my own resources. What an interest I suddenly took in some knick-knacks that stood upon the chimney-piece. How critically I examined the one or two statuettes, which, with a couple of small pictures, obtained, I believe, by some scientific process, now formed the objects of my admiration for some minutes. Even to this moment, they are still firmly printed on my memory; and when I close my eyes, I can distinctly recall, first a small bust of Lord Brougham, secondly, a Turk in alabaster, and thirdly, two views of two distinct happy valleys, each with a high mountain in the background, a river meandering gently through the centre of the picture, and of course, in the foreground, the orthodox number of very curious trees, and extraordinary shepherds and shepherdesses. My study of these works of art was, however, soon interrupted: the musicians hired for the evening began to prelude upon their instruments. A movement of some half-dozen couples took place, from the apartment in which the company had assembled, into a large uncarpeted back-room, divided from the other by folding-doors, which lay wide open. Young gentlemen were seen bowing to young ladies, who stood up, took the arms of the young gentlemen, and then proceeded into the back-room. Our hostess, who had been fidgeting about, speaking quietly to eligible youth, who, on being addressed by her, either went off and secured partners for themselves, or were led away by her, and forthwith introduced, now came up to me, and, in the blandest tones, asked if she might introduce me to a partner for the first set of quadrilles. I was about to beg to be excused; but I felt that my doing so would be of no use; besides, a desperate feeling came over me, that as I was at the ball, I might as well yield to my fate, and endure my martyrdom to the uttermost. Accordingly, I submitted, I cannot say with a very good grace, and followed my hostess, who led me up to a young lady in blue; whether handsome or not, clever-looking or not, good-natured looking or not, I had not my wits sufficiently about me to distinguish. The lady of the house then uttered some words—I believe my name and that of the young lady in blue—which, however, I did not catch; I muttered something about 'pleasure' and 'set of quadrilles;' the young lady in blue stood up and took my arm; and by some sort of instinct, rather than by any knowledge of what was to be done, I took myself off along with my partner into the back-room. My friend, who had been kind enough to patronise me at an earlier period of the evening, now rendered me a service, and spared me some trouble, by asking me to be his *vis-à-vis*. The necessity of finding some couple opposite whom to dance had never struck me, and had it not been for this young gentleman, I should have signalised myself more than I did. We took our places, and the dance began. We were at the side, so that while the upper and lower ends were going through the figure, there was for us some leisure for conversation. But, in the name of wonder, what was I to talk about? I speculated on the probability of my partner liking books, and was upon the point of opening a literary conversation with her, when I thought that perhaps she would not be pleased at being taken for a 'blue.' Then I thought that possibly she might be a frequenter of theatres and concerts, and that these would be capital subjects to talk about; but just as I was going to inquire her opinion of the company that had been for the last month performing in our city, I thought I saw some traces of the precisian in her countenance, and jumped to the conclusion that she would be insulted at even the insinuation that she was a playgoer; so on this subject also I held my peace. In this way, half-a-dozen subjects of conversation came into my mind, and were successively dismissed; and thus it came to pass, that when it came to our turn to dance, I had not exchanged a single word with my partner. When the second quadrille began, I thought that, after all, this would never do, and that say something I must, if only for the sake of adding to the buzz that was going on all around; and at last I found a topic, easy to dilate upon, if neither novel, deep, nor perhaps exceedingly interesting. And here, in the name of all shy people, past, present, and to come—in the name of all not blessed with any lively wit or exuberant fancy, do I tender a tribute of heartfelt gratitude to the man, whoever he was, who first invented the weather. The man who first made the sagacious observation, 'What a beautiful day we have had!' and who first speculated on the probability of there being rain to-morrow, was a conversational Prometheus.

He gave mankind just such a useful element, conversationally, as that bestowed by the other was physically. Where would the arts and sciences and all the necessaries of life be, but for fire, and where would conversation with very many people be, but for the weather? I therefore dashed boldly into this interesting topic. First, I observed that the room we were in was very warm; then I stated, and was happy to find that the young lady in blue concurred with me, that the day had been rather cold. I reviewed the varying state of the atmosphere for the past year; I dilated upon the horrors of rain and fog, the comparative pleasure of frost, and the delights of sunshine and blue skies. I experienced a real happiness in finding that my views and those of my fair partner, upon the subject of the east wind, did not differ in any essential particular. In such engaging discourse did I get through the rest of this, my first set of quadrilles. I cannot say that the young lady in blue seemed to take that interest in the conversation which she ought to have done; neither did she help me very much: her part in the discourse was chiefly confined to an occasional 'Oh!' or 'Ah!' or 'Yes,' or 'Indeed.' To be sure, these few words were very expressive, and were uttered in an exceedingly sweet, low tone of voice; but, on the whole, I preserve to this hour an uneasy feeling that she looked upon me as rather stupid than otherwise, and that our set of quadrilles was to her, as it was to me, something of the nature of an infliction.

The dance over, I conducted the fair one in solemn silence round and round the room in which we were, and finally, at her request, went to look for mamma, whom we found with several other elderly ladies seated in a corner of the front room, and with whom, having made a low bow, I left her, and departed. I managed to shirk some of the dances which succeeded, and for a while found some amusement in quietly observing the various little scenes that were taking place about me; but too soon Destiny, in the shape of the lady of the house, again confronted me, and once more insisted upon being allowed to find me a partner for the next quadrille. I assented, was duly introduced, and with my new partner, went to take my place. Then, to my horror, I found that the quadrilles which were about to commence were not the ordinary ones, but of the complicated species known as the Lancers. Why the Lancers are ever danced, I do not clearly understand, for it is my firm belief that the mysteries of their figures are perfectly known to few, and that most persons have only a very superficial acquaintance with them. With a clear head, a strong memory, and undivided attention, it is possible, doubtless, for the general run of ball-goers to get safely through them; but for my own part, I can truly say that, though it is a long time since I read a Greek play, or solved a proposition in Euclid, I nevertheless would rather at this moment undertake to pick my way through a chorus of Æschylus, or to achieve the passage of the Asses' Bridge, than attempt to thread the labyrinthine windings of the Lancers.

The reader may then judge of my horror when I discovered my position; any little presence of mind that I had hitherto possessed, I now completely lost. I went blindly at it, with a savage determination to do as best I could. What I did ever know of the figures, I at once forgot. I could not speak even of the weather; all my attention, such as it was, was given to observing those who danced before me, and I floundered through after a most sorry fashion. A vague confusion took the place of any regular figure. Chaos was come again. I not only was out myself, but I threw every one else out. The dance, thanks to my exertions, at one time assumed the appearance of an Irish jig, at another, that of a Scotch reel, while a certain resemblance to Sir Roger de Coverley pervaded the whole. The lookers-on seemed to consider it capital fun, but, for my own part, I longed for the floor to open under me, that I might fall, safely or not, into the hall, and thence escape in quiet. I had a wild notion of abandoning the quadrille, my partner, and the room all at once, and rushing away to any place where I should never again see the face of any one of those present. I was covered with confusion; I blushed most becomingly; and a cold perspiration broke out all over me. But all human sufferings must come to an end, and so, accordingly, did this set of the Lancers; it was over at last. I led my partner to her chaperone, and instantly, without waiting even to bid farewell to my hostess, descended to the cloak-room, found my hat, after considerable difficulty, and without more ado, left the house. I flew rather than walked home. It was raining in torrents, but I did not care. I passed two or three cab-stands, but in spite of the invitations of the drivers, I pressed on, on foot. I rather liked the rain, in fact. When I reached home, I spoke no word to those who received me; account of my evening's pleasure I paused not to give; but stalked off moodily and silently to bed, where I soon fell into a feverish sleep, varied by strange dreams, in which I saw a huge barometer dancing the Lancers with a lady in blue; while I myself stood by to guide the couple through the various figures, which, however, I invariably forgot as fast as it became necessary to recollect them. And thus ended my first ball.

THE IDYLLS OF THE KING.

Whatsoever excuses may be made for the shortcomings of our present Laureate, that of hurry—'raw Haste, half-sister to Delay'—will certainly not hold good. No cunning artificer in mosaic of most precious stones was ever more patient or more painstaking than he; no work was ever turned out more flawless, to the utmost ability of the workman, than his; the long delay and labour of the File is never spared; and if he does not keep his verses in his desk for the entire period recommended by the Latin poet, he at least retains them long enough to create a hunger for them in the hearts of men.

Alfred Tennyson is not in any sense a popular poet. His admirers, although numerous, and always increasing, are among 'the upper ten thousand' only. His somewhat severe classicism; a certain elegant haughtiness which pervades almost all his writings; the subtlety of a mind too 'skilled to track Suggestion to her inmost lair;' his conservatism; and his total lack of humour, will for long, and perhaps for ever, prevent him from becoming a poet of the People. Whenever he has attempted to grapple with affairs of the day—with any *publica materies*—as in *Maud*, they feel that it would have been better done by a meaner man. Among the intellectual classes, on the other hand—people of fashion restricting their admiration, for obvious reasons, to that class of his poems which is not the highest—there has never been poet so hailed as Alfred Tennyson. His name is perhaps the only one in modern literature which is received at both the fastidious English universities with fitting honour. The man who should speak of him disrespectfully in Combination or Common Room would be more likely to get a personal quarrel on his hands than by broaching any theological or political heterodoxy. The hard-worked curate in his lonely lodgings, the would-be hard-worked barrister in his briefless chambers, welcome the rare utterances of the Laureate with an affectionate admiration that they accord to no other living writer; while even the bowelless *Saturday Reviewer* grows genial at the sight of each fresh green volume, and turns to his *English Synonyms* for words of commendation and respect.

These *Idylls of the King* have been longer even than usual in making their wished-for appearance. Pleasant rumours of them, like sounds of music while it is yet a great way off, have reached us from time to time; odours from the four sweet flowers of which this nosegay is composed have been imparted to us, now and again, by the favoured few; but still the workman was dissatisfied, and would not part with that he had in hand. At last we have it. The *Idylls*—simple tales of love and war—are thus named; Enid, Vivien, Elaine, and Guinevere. The first and best is founded upon the old and piteous story of a true knight—the brave Geraint—mistrusting his true wife Enid. As the stupid, good, strong man is lying on a summer morn in bed, the poet takes that opportunity of making this admirable anatomical sketch of him:

He, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
And bared the knotted column of his throat,
The massive square of his heroic breast,
And arms on which the standing muscle sloped,
As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
Running too vehemently to break upon it;

while at the same time Enid makes a soliloquy. Not being so fast asleep as he seems, he overhears her, and mistranslates her words to mean that down in his dreary Devonshire (of which he is a tributary Prince), she weeps for some gay knight in Arthur's Halls. At once he grows oblivious of his former faith in her; forgetful of that pure, fair Enid, Yniol's daughter, whose sweet voice touched him so when first he heard it—

For as the sweet voice of a bird,
Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
Moves him to think what kind of bird it is
That sings so delicately clear, and make
Conjecture of the plumage and the form;
So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint;
And made him like a man abroad at morn
When first the liquid note beloved of men
Comes flying over many a windy wave
To Britain, and in April suddenly
Breaks from a coppice gemmed with green and red,
And he suspends his converse with a friend,
Or it may be the labour of his hands,
To think or say: 'There is the nightingale.'

He bids her dress in a mean garment, and mount her palfrey, and ride with him forth into the wilderness. His people had accused him of uxoriousness and sloth, as though his spurs were yet to win; and he is about to disprove that scandal with a vengeance. He will not allow poor Enid even to speak with him, and roundly rates her, when, as she leads the way, she warns him of an ambush of three bandits, whom he thus disposes of:

Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,
And down upon him bare the bandit three.
And at the midmost charging, Prince Geraint
Drave the long spear a cubit through his breast
And out beyond; and then against his brace
Of comrades, each of whom had broken on him
A lance that splintered like an icicle,
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunned the twain
Or slew them, and dismounting like a man
That skins the wild beast after slaying him,
Stript from the three dead wolves of woman born
The three gay suits of armour which they wore,
And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits
Of armour on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her: 'Drive them on
Before you;' and she drove them through the waste.

In a second encounter of the like kind he is equally successful, but his lance

A little in the late encounter strained,
Struck through the bulky bandit's corslet home,
And then brake short, and down his enemy rolled,
And there lay still; as he that tells the tale,
Saw once a great piece of a promontory
That had a sapling growing on it, slip
From the long shore-cliffs windy walls to the beach,
And there lie still, and yet the sapling grew;
So lay the man transfixt.

Which metaphor has surely something about it of that beautiful Undercliff close by the Poet's home in the Fair Island!

After a narrow escape from death or captivity in the territory of the dissolute young Earl Limours, an old admirer of Enid's, the still unreconciled pair are pursued by that false knight and his myrmidons.

But while the sun yet beat a dewy blade,
The sound of many a heavily galloping hoof
Smote on her ear, and turning round she saw
Dust, and the points of lances bicker in it.
Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
And yet to give him warning, for he rode
As if he heard her not, moving back she held
Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.
At which the warrior in his obstinacy,
Because she kept the letter of his word,
Was in a manner pleased, and turning, stood.
And in the moment after, wild Limours,
Borne on a black horse, like a thunder-cloud
Whose skirts are loosened by the breaking storm,
Half ridden off with by the thing he rode,
And all in passion uttering a dry shriek,
Dashed on Geraint, who closed with him, and bore
Down by the length of lance and arm beyond
The crupper, and so left him stunned or dead,
And overthrew the next that followed him,
And blindly rushed on all the rout behind.
But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanished panic-stricken, like a shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower;
So, scared but at the motion of the man,
Fled all the boon-companions of the earl,
And left him lying in the public way;
So vanish friendships only made in wine.

In this combat, however, the doughty Geraint is wounded near to death, and falling off his horse by the wayside, is tended by his broken-hearted Enid, till another earl, one 'Doorm, whom his shaking vassals called the Bull,' rides by, who, for *her* sake, because her face was comely, bids his retainers take to his own hall the wounded knight. Thither, in the following afternoon, returned the earl, to feast somewhat as the Wild Boar of Ardennes feasted in the Bishop's palace at Liege;

His lusty spearmen followed him with noise;
Each hurling down a heap of things that rang
Against the pavement, cast his lance aside,
And doffed his helm; and then there fluttered in,
Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,
A tribe of women, dressed in many hues,
And mingled with the spearmen: and Earl Doorm
Struck with a knife's haft hard against the board,
And called for flesh and wine to feed his spears.
And men brought in whole hogs and quarter beeves,
And all the hall was dim with steam of flesh:
And none spake word, but all sat down at once,
And ate with tumult in the naked hall,
Feeding like horses when you hear them feed.

The earl, with various indignities, endeavours to make Enid eat and drink, be merry, and put on fine clothes to please him; but she, pointing to her prostrate husband, tells him,

'I have griefs enough:
Pray you, be gentle; pray you, let me be:
I never loved, can never love but him:
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness,
He being as he is, to let me be!'

Then strode the brute earl up and down his hall,
And took his russet beard between his teeth;
Last, coming up quite close, and in his mood
Crying: 'I count it of no more avail,
Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with you;
Take my salute,' unknightly, with flat hand,
However lightly, smote her on the cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helplessness,
And since she thought, 'he had not dared to do it,
Except he surely knew my lord was dead,'
Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter cry,
As of a wild thing taken in the trap,
Which sees the trapper coming through the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his sword,
(It lay beside him in the hollow shield),
Made but a single bound, and with a sweep of it
Shore through the swarthy neck, and like a ball,
The russet-bearded head rolled on the floor.

Thus having tried his wife by many a trial, and never finding her aught but true and loyal in each, the brave Geraint acknowledges his suspicions to be false, and declares that henceforward he will rather die than doubt.

This simple framework of a simple tale, although abounding everywhere with charming fancies, is by no means too luxuriantly laden with them. Like a noble structure exquisitely carved, the poem itself is always felt to be superior to its ornaments. The lines are sometimes nervous, as the knightly limbs of those they sing, and now and then a word falls like a blow; while, despite the somewhat labyrinthine and discursive passages, we never once lose the golden thread of the tale, from first to last. The story would be a good and interesting one even though it had been written in prose.

From Elaine, the second best Idyll, in our judgment, we cull a bloody image, worthy of Solferino:

I saw him stand
High on a heap of slain, from spur to plume
Red as the rising sun with heathen blood.

And from the same poem, a description of jealousy at table, which is very terrible. There is a rumour in the court that Lancelot loves another than the queen:

Till even the knights at banquet twice or thrice
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the queen,
And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid
Smiled at each other, while the queen who sat
With lips severely placid, felt the knot
Climb in her throat, and with her feet unseen
Crushed the wild passion out against the floor
Beneath the banquet, where the meats became
As wormwood, and she hated all who pledged!

There is, it must be confessed, a cold ideality about the doings of King Arthur and his knights, which perhaps no genius could realise for us. A light that never was on sea or shore shines on that dreamy past, and gives a weird complexion to every face. Mr Tennyson, perhaps from long application to the subject, seems to have acclimatised himself, and to feel at home in that strange atmosphere; he speaks cursorily, and in the most natural manner in the world of Tristram and Isolt, of Camelot and of Usk, and with 'the Dragon of the great Pendragonship' is quite on easy terms. This is far from being the case with us, his readers; therefore, it is the greater glory to him when he touches our human hearts with the sorrows of 'the lily maid of Astolart,' whom meek Sir Percivale and pure Sir Galahead upbare when dead; or makes our cheek flame at the doings of Earl Doorm; or compels us to sympathise so deeply with 'the blameless king' when his Guinevere has fled the court, having wronged him with his dearest knight, Sir Lancelot, and in the holy house at Almesbury awaits her sentence from his faithful lips.

Scarcely, in all the range of English poetry, do we know anything grander than that great forgiveness and solemn farewell. 'This life of mine,' he says,

'I guard as God's high gift from seathe and wrong,
Not greatly care to lose; but rather think
How sad it were for Arthur, should he live,
To sit once more within his lonely hall,
And miss the wonted number of my knights,
And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds,
As in the golden days before thy sin.
For which of us, who might be left, could speak
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at thee?
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk
Thy shadow still would glide from room to room,
And I should evermore be vext with thee
In hanging robe or vacant ornament,
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.
For think not, though thou wouldst not love thy lord,
Thy lord has wholly lost his love for thee.
I am not made of so slight elements.
Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy shame.
I hold that man the worst of public foes
Who either for his own or children's sake,
To save his blood from scandal, lets the wife
Whom he knows false, abide and rule the house;
For being through his cowardice allowed
Her station, taken everywhere for pure,
She, like a new disease, unknown to men,
Creeps, no precaution used, among the crowd,
Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and saps
The fealty of our friends, and stirs the pulse
With devil's leaps, and poisons half the young.
Worst of the worst were that man he that reigns!
Better the king's waste hearth and aching heart
Than thou reseated in thy place of light,
The mockery of my people, and their bane.'

He paused, and in the pause she crept an inch
Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
Far off, a solitary trumpet blew.
Then waiting by the doors the war-horse neighed,
As at a friend's voice, and he spake again.

'Yet think not that I come to urge thy crimes;
I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
I, whose vast pity almost makes me die
To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
The wrath which forced my thoughts on that fierce law,
The doom of treason and the flaming death,
(When first I learnt thee hidden here) is past.
The pang—which while I weighed thy heart with one
Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
Made my tears burn—is also past, in part.
And all is past, the sin is sinned, and I,
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul the rest.
But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty, such as never woman wore,
Until it came a kingdom's curse with thee—
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were the king's.
I cannot take thy hand; that too is flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinned; and mine own flesh,
Here looking down on thine polluted, cries
"I loathe thee:" yet not less, O Guinevere,
For I was ever virgin save for thee,
My love through flesh hath wrought into my life

So far, that my doom is, I love thee still.
Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before high God, and thou
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine, and know
I am thine husband—not a smaller soul,
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me that,
I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I hence.
Through the thick night I hear the trumpet blow;
They summon me their king to lead mine hosts
Far down to that great battle in the west,
Where I must strike against my sister's son,
Leagued with the lords of the White Horse, and knights
Once mine, and strike him dead, and meet myself
Death, or I know not what mysterious doom.
And thou remaining here will learn the event;
But hither shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side, see thee no more.
Farewell!'

And while she grovelled at his feet,
She felt the king's breath wander o'er her neck,
And, in the darkness o'er her fallen head,
Perceived the waving of his hands that blest.

That all good will be spoken of these Idylls, we do not doubt. The worst that shall be said of them by us, is, that they contain nothing equal to the poet's old *Morte d'Arthur;* just as we might say, half peevishly, when looking on four new columns of richest stone, flawless from base to capital, that they were well enough, but nothing to the grand old fragment lying yonder, carved by the same great sculptor in his youth.

ULTIMA THULE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.

CONSIDERING the nature of their position, it is scarcely surprising that the boats and boatmen of these islands are without a rival. The former—those of them that are usually employed in fishing—eighteen feet in keel, six feet in beam, manned by six rowers, and fitted with a mighty square sail, shew at once, by the elegance and narrowness of their build, their connection with brave old Norway. In boats like these, which skim along the tops of the waves like the wing of the stormy petrel, that is still their frequent companion, their crews could ravage a village, and be at sea again, before the broader and clumsier craft of the southland fisherman could be well in the water. However improved in occupation their descendants are, in dress and appearance they do not belie their origin. Pliant shoes or *rivelins* of seal or of calf skin, with the hair left on, and neatly fastened with the sinews of those animals, adorn and protect the feet. When the wearer has attained to the dignity of a householder—and there are few who have not—a long worsted cap of many colours and fantastic pattern depends gracefully from his head; while the oar, working not in thole-pins, but a rope-noose, which gives a freedom to its motion unknown elsewhere, is plied with the unrivalled dexterity of men whose chosen home is the ocean. Should its billows rise, he instantly dons a more picturesque and peculiar garb. Over the rivelins are drawn huge boots; leathern breeches encase the limbs; a leathern cuirass, the chest and arms; a leathern slouched cap, with huge ear-lappets, the head. With an eye glancing incessantly from sky to sail, from sail to sea; an arm that gives stroke just where it will most avail, and a hand at the helm that will dodge the most threatening wave that ever rolled, your Shetland boatman is one in whose company you may *sink* the highest mountain of Foula, and feel, though forty miles from the shore, and with a current of nine knots an hour hurrying you onward, perfectly secure. It is the one dark spot in his position that his courage and skill are so ill repaid. The proprietors of the soil, feeling little inclination to reside on their barren and treeless shores, make over its management to middle-men, whose sole object is money. The fisherman is their slave. They let him his cottage and little croft, but as a yearly tenant, who may be ejected to homeless wretchedness whenever the conditions of lease are violated, which are such, at the same time, as hopelessly obstruct his elevation above a manhood of poverty and an old age of pauperism. To the middle-man he must sell his fish; from the middle-man he must buy his goods. The middle-man, being the owner of his lines and boat, has him continually in his debt; and should his brave son take a fancy to a life of enterprise in her Majesty's navy, or a merchantman, the middle-man is too prudent to forbid him, but significantly intimates that he has another tenant in view for his father's cottage, and the brave lad remains to fish for him, and starve by him, as before. This system, however mercifully carried on, is, in its very nature, one that is degrading and debasing to all concerned; and not less so, indeed, than that which was long the ruin and disgrace of Ireland. It cannot instantly be changed with success. The spirit of enterprise in the tenant has been chilled by its long continuance; the temptation to dispose of his fish by stealth and at a better market has fostered cunning and deceit in his nature; while his ignorance of the value of money—for the fish are paid for in kind only, on the truck system, with every article of food and clothing rated at the highest price, and debased to the lowest quality—conspires to give an indolence and want of enterprise to his character, which render the efforts of a generous landlord to improve his condition by more generous arrangements, at first, extremely discouraging. Such efforts, rare as they have been, are not, however, unknown; and when the light and indignation of the public eye falls sooner or later on those who overlook the duties of property, the great landowners of Shetland will yearly be seen residing for a few months on their bleak domains, bringing the reign of the middle-men to a close; offering leases to their tenantry, and conquering that unwillingness to be bound by them which cunning and ignorance have fostered, by kindly representations such as their simple natures can appreciate; giving them free permission to sell in the dearest and buy in the cheapest market they can find; and leaving, as the natural and inevitable reward of such a course, a name never to be mentioned but with gratitude.

The Shetland fisherman is an eminently superstitious being. Should you meet him in the morning, as, encased in his leathern armour, he is lazily striding to the sea, and inquire in which direction he intends going this breezy day, his luck is felt to be lost by your curiosity, and with angry look and muttered *blessing*, he wends him back to his cottage. Ask him how many ponies or sheep he has, and he feels that to mention the exact number would bring the plague against pride upon them all; and it is from this feeling, we imagine, of the danger connected with the mention of numbers, that arithmetic is a branch of learning in which the teachers can hardly bring their female pupils to be instructed. Embark with Magnus in his boat, and you find that he will hardly call any object by its right name: everything suffers a sea-change; if you speak of the cat, or the minister, ten to one but he puts you ashore again: whenever he mentions the latter at sea, he is the 'upstander.' He will spin you long yarns (but more willingly when ashore than afloat) of the *trows* or sea-demons that break his nets; of Nicker their leader (Old Nick?), who appears to the herd-boy on the moor as a saddled pony, and vanishes in a flash of fire; of a man in black, who accosts the solitary traveller, and leaves him a mangled corpse, making it the extreme of folly ever, even in daylight, to travel alone, and a positive tempting of Providence to walk without company after dusk; of seal-skins found on the shore, which are the cast-off dress of mermaids, who, until they regain them, must walk in human form; and who, from having sometimes lost them irrecoverably, have even intermarried with the sons of men, and left fair children behind them, some of whom your informer's uncle or grandfather, it may be, has often sailed with, and found them little different from others, save that they were slightly web-fingered, and that their eyes were more green than usual. They will tell you of elf-shot cattle, and children whose hearts have been stolen, and who pine away, until molten lead poured into a bowl of water, over which the proper incantation has been sung, assumes the form of the missing organ, and is a sign that the malignant fairies have been compelled to restore it to its owner, who is from that hour to be florid and well again. Offerings are still made at our Lady's ruined chapel at Weisdale of pieces of money, in order that the unappropriated maiden may find a lover; nor is it long since an elder of the kirk-session was authorised by a minute of that body to institute annually a search for these offerings, and distribute them to the parish poor. Still at St Ninian's Isle are candles burned at his fallen shrine, and models of limbs and hearts dug up, restored by his influence to a state of health; firmly as ever is it believed that the scrofula, to which their fishy and unvaried diet renders them peculiarly subject, would rapidly vanish if the finger of her gracious Majesty condescended to touch its victims; nay, such virtue has even the effigies of royalty, that some crown and half-crown pieces of Charles I. are preserved in the islands as a sacred inheritance, while there are few localities in which a living witness is not found of the reality of 'the cure by the coin.' When worthy and reverend Mr Brand and his seven co-presbyters visited Shetland in 1700, as a deputation from the General Assembly, to 'eradicate the relics of paganism and idolatry, and abolish night-walkings in procession round ruined chapels, and the uncleanness they occasioned,' runic knots could be cast which had power to bring the eagle from the sky; and mermaids were so commonly vouched for, that the worthy man was brought himself to believe in their existence—'it being told him by a worthy gentleman of good credit that a man fishing one day, and finding something unusually heavy on his line, discovered on drawing it that he had hooked a woman through the lips, with full-formed breasts and long hair; and that on his companion, by a stroke of his knife, at once severing the line, and wounding her in the neck, she fell back into the sea, with the word, "Alas!" while her murderer was haunted ever after by a spirit, who addressed him night and day with the words: "Would you dare to do that, who killed the woman?" till he pined and died.'

When he visited Shetland, the embers were scarcely extinguished of the fire at which a 'varlet named Luggie' was burned for witchcraft, and for drawing ready cooked fish from a hole in a green hillock—still called Luggie's Knowe—that could have been boiled nowhere but in Satan's caldron. What wonder how deeply the superstitious feeling is implanted in a country so wild and lonely; with its short winter-day, and long night of seven months, made magnificent by the roar and the foam of the waves below, and the play of the aurora borealis, of every form and hue, in the sky above! Walking with a friend one bright summer-day over a lonely moor, with a couple of stout boatmen carrying our wallets, there was heard from time to time a long wail, as of a person in deadly pain, that effectually terrified Swein and Olla, and in no small degree puzzled ourselves. Stopping, the cry stopped; proceeding, it awoke again in notes of unutterable woe. Swein was expecting to become a father. Poor Britta, twenty miles off in Papa Stour, was taken in his absence with her pains, and, poor fellow, these cries, he seemed to feel—and his honest face became pale and bedewed with sweat-drops at the thought—were her last farewell to him, who should never see her but in her shroud. 'No, no, Swein; what have you in your hand, man?' 'As I live by sillocks, the noise is coming from the hole in this blown egg! Who would have thought that a dirty *lune*, even if it had struck me with its wing across the eyes, could have made such a fool of me?' This resolution of the mystery was found correct. Swein had been intrusted with the rare and beautiful egg of the bold bird he named, taken from the cliffs of Foula, and presenting the hole in its side to the action of the air as he walked, it had occasioned the sound, and given him the fright in question; but with no unlucky consequences, for Swein met us a few days afterwards a happy father, while 'Britta was as well as could be expected.'

There are two tenants of the open pastures and green holms of Shetland, of whom so much has been heard as to make them, to the curious stranger, a subject of first inquiry—the sheep and the ponies. Curious-looking creatures they both are, and, next to their bounteous sea, a main source of maintenance to the natives, rich and poor. The common lands are extensive, and preserved with jealous care in their undiminished integrity by riding the marches, or the *hagra*, with small boys in company, who used to be whipped from time to time on the route on large stones, to make the exact boundaries well remembered in after-years by their natural *a-posteriori* recollections of the pain; and these *commonties* being burdened with only a slight tax called *scat*—for it is the *udaller* only, of the Magnus Troil breed, that holds them scat, vulgarly, '*scot* free,' '*de deo et sole*' as his charter has it—the poorest are in circumstances to feed a few sheep, and to have a share at least in a few ponies. The appearance of the former is far from beautiful. The lambs, indeed, are eminently so, with limbs like the small musk-deer, scarcely thicker than a good quill; elegant and fawn-like heads, and graceful and bounding forms, while they are spotted and striped with gray, brown, black, and white in a manner unseen and unsuspected in sheep before; but when grown, and after their fleece has been touched, they give little outward token, as their deer-like forms and high carried heads sweep past you, that their ragged and tattered coat is of so exquisitely fine a fibre as it is. The explanation was given by our worthy friend Brand, a hundred and fifty years ago. 'Their diversity of colours,' he says, 'would render them very beautiful if taken due care of; but they neither wash nor clip them, nor have they any shears, but tear the wool off with their hands, which, as it is very painful to the poor beasts, so it makes them look not so well-favoured, but like creatures whose skin is scratched with briers and thorns.' This cruel process is defended on this ground, that from the variety of colours and qualities each fleece presents, the hand is the only instrument by which the sorting and parcelling of them could be effected. 'With these handfuls of gray I shall make a veil or two,' says the thrifty housewife; 'and here is enough of white almost for a fine shawl; the brown will do for a pair of socks; and the black and hairy stuff will make a nice warm bed-cover.' Be it so, mistress;

but in what a peculiar accent and phrase you all speak. You have no neuter gender, I find; nor, like your Gaelic cousins, do you *she* everything. The boat you row, as the billow it rides on, is always *he;* and as the shrill high tone in which you end your sentences, like that of one speaking across a tempest, tells of a stormy land, and of sea-calls through winds and waves, so the words you use, gentle maiden, as well as that gracefully wreathed handkerchief round your head, and that jacket, open in front, and fitting so closely to your bust and arms, speak as unequivocally of a northern origin. In truth, we mistook you at first for a Bavarian broom-girl. Thou, is *tow* with you; and three, *tree.* Your cheerful compliance with our request to let us see how you grind your daily bread on the stone-mill—the *quern* in the corner there—is given in a true German *ya, ya.* While your respected father, who sits mending his *rivelins* on the wooden settle, is addressed in the usual *you,* little Jamie is drawn away from the peat-fire in the centre there with a '*du* or a *tou* must away.' It is of the seed-time you are speaking when you tell us of the work of the *voar;* and it is sandbanks you mean by the *airs* of Stroam; *ouse,* and *gio,* and *voe,* terms you have ever in your pretty mouth, are creeks of the sea, it seems. It is Sunday you mean by the *haly.* The titles by which you designate your companions—Laurence, John's son; Minna, Peter's daughter—with the names of your weights and measures, your *bismars* and *lispunds,* are all Danish; and you speak of dear old Scotland as if it were a foreign land.

The ponies cover every pasture, shaggy as bears as yet, with their winter coats, but clearing a five-feet wall like deer. To keep them to their proper domain is simply impossible; and the sheriff of the county has the trouble, in consequence, of seeing that each owner's mark is recorded in a public register, and verified on any occasion of a dispute about title from its pages. 'A cross in the right lug and a nick behind; a nip in the left lug and a nick before, and the tail docked,' are among the peculiar entries that may be found there, and more than ever at present they are worth such vigilance. In consequence of the merciful prohibition of female labour in coal-mines, the active little pony is now employed in their murky galleries; and an animal that, a few years ago, could be purchased for two or three pounds, now brings nearly triple those sums. Sure-footed, easy, sagacious, and docile creatures are they, subsisting on the coarsest and most scanty fare, relishing a thistle top with as satisfied an expression as a donkey, and in spring and winter not disdaining the sea-weed of the rocks. To them, as to the cows of the islands, a boiled fish is a delicious luxury; and they do not, it is said, despise a raw one. Both their instinct and that of the sheep is certainly remarkable in knowing, in the most inland pasture, the precise hour when the ebb occurs, and the shore is available for their hunger. Whether by night or day, and from whatever quarter the wind blows, seaward or landward, the instant the tide begins to turn, down they troop in company to the juicy weeds; but at the same time they grow weak and sickly from the unnatural fare, and are right glad, we doubt not, when the showers of spring have revived the pastures, and sent them bounding to their hills again.

As in all the islands that surround Scotland, the Shetlanders tell you that their ponies were brought hither by the Spanish Armada. The wrecks of that magnificent and impious armament were indeed strewn widely on every shore, from St Kilda in the far west to the coast of Norway; and the little nags that we have seen used by the peasantry on the sandy potato-fields of Benbecula and rocky platforms of Barra, told, by their fine heads and expanded nostrils, broad chest and graceful action, that their ancestors had borne warlike Saracens into battle, and that they themselves were cousins only once removed from the prancing jennets to be met with in a fair in the Pyrenees; but your long, lump-headed Shetland nag evidently declares itself of a coarser breed. Traces and traditions of the Armada, however, are rife in Shetland. It was on the long steep precipice that forms the western side of Fair Isle that the giant ship of the Duke of Medina Sidonia found destruction. That high-born noble, the haughtiest of even Spanish grandees, was thrown, with 200 of his crew, on this then barbarous and barren rock, that could hardly afford sustenance to its few inhabitants, but who appear at first to have shewn their guests a willing hospitality, which they amply requited in gold doubloons, that still, or recently at least, were preserved as heirlooms. But gold was not food. All but fish threatened rapidly to fail them. The Spaniards began to disappear mysteriously, being hurled by the natives in unsuspecting moments from the rocks; and fearful and wild as the roost of Sumburgh is (so the strait of thirty-four miles width that flows between Fair Isle and Shetland is called), the duke had no alternative but to gather the relics of his men and fortune, and with the ship's boats that were saved, attempt the passage. The family of Humphries still exists by whom the magnificent stranger was received; and Brand, in 1700, conversed with an old gentlewoman, who, when a girl, had often heard her grandmother say that she had seen him, true to his Spanish pride to the last. 'Did you ever,' said he to one of his host's relations, as he sat dressed in the remains of his rich wardrobe, and assuming the look in which nobles glassed themselves—'did you ever before see a face like mine?' 'Farcie on the face!' cried the blunt islander, 'I have seen prettier men hanging on the Burra gallows'—the Scalloway place of execution. His pride, however, did not extinguish the compassion or generosity of his entertainers, who landed him safely at Dunkirk, to carry tidings to the haughty cities of the Netherlands that one member at least of their invincible armament survived. Forgotten elsewhere, the traces and memory of his visit still linger in Fair Isle. The Spaniard taught them, with the lichens and plants of the rocks and lakes, to make the brilliant dyes for which they are still celebrated. The gay and fantastic patterns which they work on their hose, gloves, waistcoats, and night-caps, and which make the arrival of a boat from Fair Isle an event even at Lerwick, are all from the Spaniards; and from them too, probably, is their utter ignorance of commerce. The Fair Isle household will deposit on the shopkeeper's counter a vast pile of these rich and party-coloured materials, to have their value decided by given quantities of tea and sugar, clothes and tobacco; and if, when the barter is concluded, the trader present mother or daughter with an actual sixpence, it is treasured as a charm, and the donor regarded as the most beneficent of human beings.

Six miles to the west of Lerwick is the vale of Scalloway; and when you halt on the brow of the eminence that enables you to command its richly cultivated fields, its church, its manse by the silver lake, its village and bay, and boats and rocks, which form a most pleasing contrast to the dark moor and bare heights through which you have passed, there is much in the scene connected with human feeling to invest it with a higher interest. In that quiet manse there still lives the good old minister who, five-and-fifty years ago, taught the people to avail themselves of the stores of limestone on which they walked; who abolished the old-fashioned, one-shafted ox-plough, then universally employed, for the handier implement of the south; who shewed them what a cart, and a gig, and a good road were like; who was the host and the friend of Sir Walter Scott, when he visited the islands; and whose struggles to overcome the unwillingness of the people to adopt his improvements, suggested to the great novelist the amusing character—like, however, only on this point—of Triptolemus Yellowley. That rocky islet in the lake was once the throne of justice, where the *Ting* or law-court of appeal was held, and where the *Fowde*, who presided over it, with power of life and death, enthroned himself in rude state to dispense justice to the injured, and to furnish, on yonder hillock on the shore, the 'kindly gallows' with its waving fruit. The quiet churchyard tells you of the worth and final resting-place of the last of these rural judges, 'Thomas Boyne, Fowde of Tingwall, ane honest man.' The old gray stone yonder is a battle-monument; and that other commemorates the spot where, a year or two previous to Brand's visit, an old woman and her daughter were burned for witchcraft. But most prominent to the eye, as first in interest, is the stately, though now ruined castle of Earl Patrick Stewart, built amid the groans, and cemented with the blood of oppression. Stimulated by the successful villainies in Orkney of his father, Lord Robert Stewart, a bastard brother of Queen Mary, and desirous to emulate the magnificence of his palace there; Patrick, having received a grant of Shetland from the crown at an easy rent, transferred himself to Scalloway, to ruin, by oppressive exactions of wealth and labour, by confiscation, banishment, and death, every udaller and independent individual within his influence. A deputation of the inhabitants, goaded to desperation, resolved at length to appeal to royalty for protection; and on presenting themselves in their seal-skin coats to King James, obtained that their oppressor should be summoned to repair to Holyrood, with what event we know. We had sailed a few days previously round the Noup of Nesting, admiring the stupendousness of its height, and wondering why the manse of the present parson should have been perched so perilously on its summit, and so near its brink; when we were told that its site commemorates the spot where an unworthy predecessor met his fate. When the welcome news reached Scalloway that the prime oppressor was no more—and here again good Mr Brand may be consulted—the public feeling turned naturally to the parson of Orphir in Orkney, the clerical abettor of his many crimes. Three brothers of the name of Sinclair, udallers whose lands the parson had caused to be confiscated, sought him in his parish in Orkney, pursued him thence to Shetland, hunted him from island to island like sleuth-hounds, overtook him at last in the parish of Nesting, and pursued him as he fled towards its precipice to commit himself apparently to the more merciful arms of the boiling deep. His courage failed him, however. When he faltered in purpose, and sank from terror, his pursuers with a yell were upon him, plunged their daggers into his bosom, and, tearing his heart out, drank his blood. This fearful incident is well remembered in the islands, and strong men still shudder in broad day when they speak of the parson of Orphir and Earl Patrick.

THE FRENCHMAN IN EDINBURGH.

If we were to tell one of even the better-informed class of the French people that the Lord Mayor of London was not at one and the same time Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor, Commander-in-chief, and Lord High Admiral of England, we might have a reasonable chance of being believed. But if we were to tell the same person that there was *not* a market-place in the city of London, specially made and provided for the purpose, where men, of all ranks and stations in life, publicly and daily bought and sold wives, our assertion would be met with that almost imperceptible raising of the eyebrows and shoulders, by which a Frenchman, too polite to indicate his unbelief in words, as unequivocally and offensively expresses it in action. This barbarous practice of wife-selling, which, according to learned French authorities, is so prevalent in London, has, as we learn from the same source, progressed northwards, and, having crossed the Tweed, now obtains in the Scottish metropolis. Indeed, M. Paul de Kock, a writer of European reputation, who ought, at least, to know something of the world and its inhabitants, informs us in a sentence that may be very witty and very logical, but of which we cannot exactly discover the point, that 'the Scotch are advancing in civilisation. They do not wear pantaloons; but they sell their wives, and that makes up for it.'

How the writer happened to have a peep at Edinburgh life, through a mental telescope of the French pattern, was simply thus. Passing one of the minor Parisian theatres—*Le Théâtre des Folies-Nouvelles*—lately, our attention was attracted by a gaudily printed *affiche*, announcing that one of the pieces to be performed the same evening was written by M. Paul de Kock, and entitled *A Wife to be Sold;* (*Femme à Vendre*); moreover, that the scene was laid in Edinburgh. Ever anxious to acquire, and, if possible, to distribute information, we determined to witness the performance; and having done so, now proceed to introduce the piece, with its principal *dramatis personæ*, to the readers of this *Journal.*

One Blaireau, a Parisian sign-painter, and a wild young scamp as well, is much struck by accidentally hearing the following chorus sung in one of M. Scribe's operas:

> Oh, the Scottish mountaineer,
> The open-handed mountaineer,
> Will give for nothing the best of cheer.

The sign-painter, whose inferiority as an artist reduces him to receive the lowest rate of remuneration, is, nevertheless, afflicted with as insatiable a love of pleasure as the highest wages would permit him to enjoy. In short, if he expends his earnings on pleasure, he must starve—if he expends them on food, he must relinquish pleasure; but life without pleasure is scarcely more endurable to him than death from want of food: consequently, the chorus of the opera, setting forth the hospitable character of the Scottish people, seems a happy clue to guide him out of his distressing dilemma. He at once determines to proceed to Scotland, and there, living for nothing, to earn a large sum of money by painting signs for the savage but hospitable mountaineers; to, afterwards, joyfully return and spend his gains among the delightful gaieties of Paris. Accordingly, he sets out on his journey, and in due time arriving in Edinburgh, he takes up his quarters at the sign of the Golden Lion, kept, of course, by a Scotchman, rejoicing in the very national cognomen of Bil Boque. As may be supposed, this Edinburgh landlord is a character. He wears a red kilt, red stockings, red garters, red coat, and red night-cap, the ineffectual redness of all which, however, is paled by the blazing rubescence of his hair and beard; while his no less rubicund face is covered with numerous fiery excrescences, resembling Bailey's beads on the disc of the eclipsed sun. He has also, when not speaking, a curious habit of twisting his body in a peculiar and indescribable manner, as if he wished somehow or other to wriggle himself out of his skin; a movement that seldom fails in bringing down the rapturous applause of the easily pleased spectators.

The 'bros,' 'hagshis,' 'afnafs,' and 'grocs' of the Golden Lion are little to the taste of the refined Parisian sign-painter; but he admires those very curiously orthographised edibles and potables still less, when he finds that the sordid, savage landlord

—unlike the open-handed mountaineers of M. Scribe's opera—expects to be paid for them. Blaireau, having no money, reluctantly consents to paint a new sign in liquidation of his reckoning. The sign is to represent a golden lion; but the artist's *spécialité* is a red rose—the peculiar bent of his genius leading him to the exclusive study of that flower—so he paints a rose on the sign-board, inscribing underneath it, THE GOLDEN LION. Bil Boque is terribly enraged at this proceeding; but the artist, feigning astonishment at such irrational anger, asserts that a full-blown rose—to say nothing of its being more natural—is undoubtedly a much more picturesque object than a golden lion; that the inscription beneath the rose is an original idea, worthy of all commendation; besides, how were the passers-by to know that there was not a golden lion painted underneath the rose? 'You do not understand,' he continued, 'these delicate ideas in Scotland. Now, in Paris, in the Quartier Breda, a coachmaker has a sign representing Louis XIV. in his travelling carriage; and though on the sign-board one can only see a carriage with the blinds drawn down, yet everybody understands that the Grand Monarque is riding inside of it.' All these arguments, instead of mollifying, serve rather to irritate the already provoked landlord. He refuses to take the sign; and disbelieving Blaireau's false assertion that the latter daily expects a valuable property from Paris, demands immediate payment of his bill, and in default thereof, violently thrusts the unfortunate Frenchman into the street.

Cold and hungry, a homeless wanderer in the streets of Edinburgh, Blaireau, bewailing his hard fortunes, bitterly execrates M. Scribe and his mendacious opera, which gave so illusive a picture of Scottish hospitality. But, ha! who does he see? Can it be possible? Yes, truly, it is his old Parisian crony and boon-companion, Maslignac. After a fraternal embrace, they relate their respective adventures. Maslignac had fallen in love with a Scotch equestrian *artiste*, as, in the character of Flora Macdonald, dressed in the national costume, and guiding two barbed steeds, she rescued the 'bon Prince Charli' from a host of Saxon enemies in the sawdust-sprinkled arena of the Hippodrome. Enslaved by the charms of this daring horsewoman, he followed her to Scotland; but, unfortunately, she was married; and scarcely had she placed her foot upon her native soil, so falsely termed the land of freedom, than her husband seized her, and putting a rope round her neck, led her to the market-place, and sold her—yes, sold her, for twenty shillings, to a barbarous, bare-legged mountaineer, who led her off in triumph before the despairing eyes of the agonised Frenchman. 'Why,' asks Blaireau, 'did you not purchase her yourself?' The question seems simple enough, yet the reply is exceedingly complicated, Maslignac giving no less than six separate reasons why he did not purchase the fair equestrian; but as one of the six is, that he did not possess a single sou, we may reasonably be excused from recapitulating the remaining five.

In fact, Maslignac is as poor as his compatriot; but though utterly destitute in a strange country, the two still retain those inventive faculties, and that address in confronting and surmounting difficulties, which so eminently characterise their nation; besides, both are imbued with a bitter hatred against the perfidious and detestable Bil Boque; for Maslignac, too, had patronised the Golden Lion, and being by profession a modeller of statuettes, had been employed by the inhospitable Scottish landlord to model his hideous figure for a present to his lady-love. She, however, declined to accept it, declaring that it was the effigy of an orang-outang, rather than of a man. The irascible Bil Boque then, most unjustly, attributing the ill-favour of his conformation to the unskilfulness of the modeller, refused to pay him for his labour, and closed accounts by thrusting him also penniless into the street.

The unfortunate exiles have two problems to solve: first, to obtain the means of immediate subsistence; and, in the second place, to be revenged upon Bil Boque. A happy idea strikes Maslignac. The landlord of the Golden Lion has one weak point—he is most anxious to marry, but can find no woman to accept him as a husband. Now, it appears, that when the equestrian *artiste* left Paris to return to her native country, she forgot a small box of wearing apparel, which Maslignac brought with him, but was so overpowered by the terribly affecting scene in the Scottish market-place, that he never thought of giving it to her. The modeller has a talent for the drama; what Parisian has not? He will attire himself in the *artiste's* apparel, and Blaireau will sell him to the wife-wanting landlord—the two trusting to their ready wits, and the general chapter of accidents, for the *dénouement*.

No sooner said than done. Maslignac disguises himself in female attire; and, in justice to the performers, we must say that the 'make-up' is perfect, and the whole scene most absurdly laughable. Blaireau then puts a rope round his companion's neck, and leads him along the street, crying: 'A wife to be sold.' Passing the Golden Lion, the landlord rushes to the door, exclaiming: 'What have you got there?'

'I told you,' replies Blaireau, 'that I expected a valuable property from France, and behold it has arrived.'

Bil Boque, falling into the snare, is at once captivated: full of admiration, he critically examines the assumed lady, while the sign-painter, calling attention to each excellence, pathetically laments the dire necessity which parts him from the rare beauty and charming social talents of his dearest wife.

Bil Boque is so far satisfied; but the lady is veiled—he must see her face. This is a critical moment; but, thanks to pearl-powder, rouge, ringlets, and *cosmétique*, the ordeal is safely passed. At sight of her features, the landlord is still more enraptured. What an attraction to customers she would be, if domiciled in his bar! She dances, she sings, she can even 'boax;' and exhibits a proof of her knowledge of the interesting science of the 'boax Anglais,' by severely pommelling the too-easily duped Bil Boque, who, enchanted by this last specimen of her abilities, exclaims, 'She is mine!' and pays into the hands of Blaireau twenty guineas—the sum demanded for her. A grand merry-making ensues. The inhospitable landlord, in the fulness and joy of his heart, becomes generous; 'grocs, afnafs, ponches,' are freely consumed at his expense. They dance to the cacophonous music of a band of bagpipes. The fun becomes fast and furious, and at last Maslignac, forgetting his assumed character, in a paroxysm of delight at cheating the landlord, flings his legs so high as to disclose the nether habiliments of a man beneath his expansive petticoats. Bil Boque instantaneously sees that he has been duped; his drunken fury may partly be imagined—it cannot be described. A scrambling scuffle ensues, but the Frenchmen escape with the twenty guineas, singing a gay duet anticipatory of the pleasures of Paris; and, as the curtain falls, Bil Boque is seen alone upon the stage, convulsively clutching an object like an immense wire-aviary, a remnant of the pseudo-lady's dress, and grinding out from between his teeth a sound, irreducible to words, but somewhat resembling sacrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrre crrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrinoline.

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THINGS OF MY TIME.

ALTHOUGH my years are a few short of sixty, it is surprising what changes I have seen. When I contrast what has taken place in my time with what used to be done in former ages, it seems as if I had chanced to live in a period when the world, heretofore asleep, had for the first time got into a waking state. The last century certainly did a few clever things in the invention of steam-power, the creation of pneumatic chemistry, and so forth—but it was merely the herald of another and brighter epoch.

When I first saw and sailed on salt water, there was no such thing as steam-navigation. I was studying Virgil before there was even that first little vessel on the Clyde on account of which poor Henry Bell of Helensburgh had to stand so much ridicule. I saw the first steamer put upon the Firth of Forth, and remember the wonder it occasioned. Gaslight was then spoken of, but not effected. Professor Pillans, who advocated it in the *Edinburgh Review* eight or ten years before it was seen in Edinburgh itself, is still teaching his class in our university, a hale and hearty man. From about 1819 or 1820, it has been blazing in every street, and nearly in every house. People born since the introduction of these two great modern conveniences can form no idea of what a different thing the world was without them.

Another of the great improvements of my youthful days was in the arts connected with the production of books. When, about 1817, I first entered a printing-office, I remember viewing with wonder the pressman wielding his two huge ink-balls—a most clumsy device, which, two or three years thereafter, the glutinous roller had almost entirely superseded. Entering a bookbinder's shop about the same time, I saw a man using a series of separate heated tools to stamp the back-title of a volume. It was a piece of the highest skill to use these stamps neatly, so as to produce a handsome title; and 'a good letterer' was the leading toast at bookbinders' feasts. In a very short while afterwards, mankind had attained to the idea and the practice of putting the letters together in a little case, and using them by one impression, thus saving three-fourths of the workman's time, and also producing superior work. In most printing-offices in my early days, there was only the old-fashioned fixed press, all but unchanged since the time of Faust and Guttenberg. The representative 'prelum,' so often seen on title-pages of the sixteenth century, was perfectly applicable to the engine generally used in 1818. There were, however, two or three improved forms of the printing-press—above all, James Ruthven's—which were slowly making their way into offices; and already, for a few years, there had been an example of the printing-machine in the *Times* office in London. Very few more years had passed, when the pristine press was completely superseded by a variety of improved ones, and double-cylinder printing-machines were coming into very general use, giving occasion for cheap periodicals and people's editions of standard books, and thus adding prodigiously to the educational means of the country. Here I cannot but cite the changes of the typographic art as something strikingly typical of that contrast of ages with which I started. Till Lord Stanhope's improvements about 1793, there had been none for centuries; since that time, they have been infinite, and a stride has been made as from infancy to manhood.

In nothing has there been greater improvement since my youthful days than in the means of travelling and of communicating intelligence. I remember a thrice-a-week fly, for three insides and one out, where there is now a railway with three trains *per diem*. For travelling between London and Edinburgh there was a daily mail-coach, carrying four persons inside, and taking three days on the journey. It was thought an immense advance when a hot-headed enthusiast in coach-contracting set up one which went from Edinburgh to Glasgow in five hours! A coach-ticket to London cost five pounds, and there were a driver and guard to be feéd every twenty miles. You had the alternative of a Leith smack, which might not arrive in the Thames for three weeks. A gentleman once left Leith for London by such a conveyance about a week before Christmas. In a company of his friends dining together on Christmas evening, a regret was expressed that he was not present—when in he walked. The vessel had never got out of the Firth, and, tiring at length of the confinement, he had come ashore. The journey to London is now performed, with unfailing certainty, in ten and a half hours; and a temperate person who travels by night, may go the whole way without tasting or requiring any refreshment. Through the same mechanism, a letter written in London at dinner-time, is in Edinburgh next day at breakfast-time. But intelligence may be flashed from the one place to the other in an inappreciable space of time by the electric telegraph, enabling the provincial stockbroker to hear of the state of things on 'Change every hour, and to instantly purchase or sell, as he pleases. How different is this from what was the custom in my young days! The battle of Waterloo, which happened on a Sunday, was not known with us till the next Friday evening. An important event, such as the rejection of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords, got cool in London before the news had reached the remoter parts of the empire. Then there is the cheapness, as well as the facility of correspondence, resulting in the fact that we have now five hundred millions of letters by the inland post per annum, instead of the one hundred millions which formed the total amount before the adoption of Mr Rowland Hill's plan. It is impossible for the mind to follow this increase of letter-writing into its special bearings on the convenience of all the individuals concerned; but we may form the general idea that the increase of convenience to the public at large is enormous; also that the social consequences must be very important. To travel long ago was a rare exception from the common strain of life. There was a law in Scotland, enforcing on any one who had been abroad, that he must appear within a short time and give public testimony of his religious opinions being uninjured by the journey. Our stay-at-home habits were of course a preservative for every prejudice of education. Can we doubt that the frequent opportunities we now have of seeing that there are virtues and kindly affections in men of distant regions and antagonistic professions, as well as in our own people, must lead to considerable changes—making us perhaps worse sectarians, but better Christians?

Equally striking have been the improvements in what I would call, comprehensively, access to knowledge. Long ago, a boy, with a limited command of pocket-money, which was my case, had a chance of getting a barely readable volume of some kind at an auction or a stall; ten to one, it was something ill fitted either to amuse or to instruct, and probably something calculated to do more harm than good. Now, the books of a tolerable quality attainable by this class are legion. As to newspapers, the first time I was ever sent for one in my boyhood, was for a person in depressed and unfortunate circumstances, interested in hearing of the fate of Marshal Ney. It cost sevenpence—more than the value of a dinner to the purchaser. The importance of a free press was then felt; but was it free when the price of a single sheet of news was so high? A small body of men, who felt strongly the power of the newspaper as a means of educating the community, has at length brought about the fact of a cheap, and therein really free press; and there has been no event in this country of weightier import to the community. Those who at first opposed, and have so long persisted in sneering at it, will, I venture to predict, be in time ashamed of themselves.

In my early day, among the things most talked of, and talked of with the most anxiety, were the superabundance of the people, and the difficulty of getting employment for them. One of the leading sections of the book of political economy was about 'gluts.' No subject more clamorously assailed the ears and feelings of the legislature than 'agricultural distress.' The doctrines of Mr Malthus, asserting a tendency in mankind to increase faster than the means of subsistence, hung like a millstone round the neck of the nation. Frequent and severe pestilence in the form of typhus fever bespoke the defective nutriment of the great bulk of the people. It does not require a sexagenarian, nor yet a quadragintarian, to remember when all these were prominent matters. Strange to say, within a few years, they have all been consigned to the shades of oblivion. By the simple process of removing certain unnatural props from agriculture, it has become an active, prosperous profession; remunerative employment has been found for all; typhus fevers have in a manner ceased; 'gluts' have vanished from the pages of Mr M'Culloch. The products of the national industry exported to other countries have sprung up from under fifty millions before 1846, to a hundred and twenty-six millions—that is, become as 5 to 2. The single port of Liverpool now sends out as much as the whole United Kingdom did fifteen years ago. Under these circumstances, Mr Malthus and his ideas have quietly dropped out of notice. He only embodied the fallacy of a law-made difficulty. Another painful and frequent topic of the days when George III. was king was the national debt. None but rabid ministerialists could be easy under it. But we have seen it sink into comparative insignificance by reason of the resources of the debtor-people being so immensely enlarged; and it is also one bugbear the less for the modern generation.

While all these material improvements have been going on, there has been also an improvement in the ideas and feelings of men. In my youth, there was a low tone of thinking about public affairs, in comparison with what is now prevalent. There is room for further improvement; but that does not negative the advances that have already been made. Public men seem now to have more humane feeling than they had; and this appears to me, more than anything else, the basis of the deference now paid by all public men to the opinions of the community. The court is less influential than it was in politics; but it is regarded with infinitely more genuine affection and esteem, and has an aspect of stability beyond what it ever formerly had. The habits of the upper and middle classes have in my time undergone great improvement, chiefly by the substitution of refined and intellectual for coarse and material indulgences. In at least outward deference to the professed religion, their practice is now wholly different from what it once was. In the great bulk of the industrial classes also, there is a decided improvement. They live better, have less of debasing indulgences, save more, and are altogether advanced in the scale of thinking beings. Unhappily, there are still many who do not exhibit any change for the better, and amongst these a chronic misery of course resides; but such are always becoming more and more strikingly the exceptions to the rule.

The intellectual advance is most strikingly marked by the extinction of many of the fallacies once prevalent. Since I became a reader of the parliamentary debates, there were men who believed, and avowed their belief in the House of Commons, that the taxes were no drain upon the national resources. Dr Chalmers used to give lectures in which he advocated the beneficial effect of taxes to the community. Mr Frederick Robinson described them as a fund fructifying for the benefit of the people. It was at a comparatively late period that men supported all the ghastly fallacies of protection, and would unblushingly dine and spout speeches in behalf of that delusion. Such absurdities would not now be heard of in any kind of assembly in England, and this because the principles of a just political economy are now generally diffused among the educated part of the community. During the same time, the common people in England have been put to school, and education has been largely promoted both in Scotland and Ireland. A knowledge of certain scientific principles bearing upon human welfare, particularly those regarding health, has also been imparted to many who formerly never heard of such things.

It seems, in short, as if the world had recently completed one great epoch of its existence, and passed into an era in which for the first time there was to be an active progress in useful and rational things. It is not, perhaps, that there has been any remarkable access of sense not possessed before, but only that many of the old obstructions to enlightenment have now worn themselves out, and a spirit, always straining forward, is for the first time allowed freedom to go on. Though such be the case, it must be acknowledged that many impediments to progress still exist, and the advanced minds have still much to contend with. Seeing, however, how every real step forward lessens these difficulties, we have certainly much encouragement to keep up the struggle.

MY GERMAN TUTOR.

Nothing could have happened more opportunely. I was sitting alone in the study, trying in fifty different ways to solve that most perplexing problem, 'how to make two ends meet,' when a letter was put into my hand, which threw a brilliant and unexpected light on my path.

I was wearing myself out. The entire charge of a widely scattered flock in a rural parish in England, the care of a young and increasing family, with a delicate, tenderly nurtured mother, whose education, as the youngest child of wealthy parents, had but ill prepared her for the daily struggle with petty cares and anxieties which she strove to bear so cheerfully; and, above all, the training and tuition of four riotous young rascals of from ten to twelve, whose minds and morals I was endeavouring to improve preparatory to their entering life at a public school, would be a severe ordeal to the stoutest health and strongest nerves; and I possessed neither.

But what could I do? The result of all my calculations went to prove that I could not afford to give such a salary to a tutor as would secure the services of a scholar and a gentleman; and to such only could I delegate the trust committed to me.

Before speaking of the contents of the important letter that proved so welcome an interruption to my perplexed musings, I must give a slight sketch of my vicarage, as some notion of its outward appearance and internal arrangement will be necessary to make my story comprehensible. It consists chiefly of a square mass of red brick building, in the style prevalent in the days of the earlier Georges; and with its ruddy hue unsubdued by the lapse of a century, seems to blush for its own extreme hideousness. Connected with this, at the time of which I write, about two years ago, was a fragment of a building of much earlier date, composed of lath and plaster, with strong transverse beams of oak, on one of which was carved a date considerably anterior to the Reformation. This ancient structure contained the room dignified by the name of the library, with the kitchen and other domestic offices on the ground-floor, and above were several bed-chambers, occupied by servants, with the exception of one over the library, which was kept vacant for the use of a guest. It was in the old library, my haven of refuge, where I wrote my sermons, saw my parishioners when they came to me for advice or assistance, read, mused, and perhaps occasionally dozed, that I was sitting, when old Nanny, the village post-woman, who was familiar with the ways of the house, knocked unceremoniously at the window, and handed me *the* letter.

It was from a young German, whose acquaintance I formed during the time of the Great Exhibition in 1851. He had been sent from Berlin, in charge of some scientific instruments; and my good friend Dr ——, the astronomer, at whose house we met, was warm in praise of Hermann Schwarz, whose extremely prepossessing manner and appearance were of themselves a recommendation. In short, a mutual liking sprang up between us; and when we parted, it was with a cordial wish on both sides to meet again.

I heard from him occasionally during the years which followed. He was engaged on a translation into German of some of the works of the earlier Latin fathers, in which I took great interest, and he wrote now and then to report progress. But the letter I now held in my hand was in a very different strain. It contained an earnest, almost passionate appeal to me, to help the writer in finding any employment, any honest means of earning bread, which would enable him to leave Berlin, and come to England. 'You know something of me,' it concluded; 'dear and respected friend, you know I have some talent, some energy; I may be of some use in the world! Well, I will do anything; I will work with my hands, my head, my heart, so that I may earn a mouthful of bread in England, and leave for ever my Germany, that once dear fatherland, where to remain longer will be madness for me. Do not ask me to explain this change in my feelings, suffice it that I assure you I have done nothing to forfeit your good opinion.' There was much more to the same effect; and the whole letter was so incoherent, and differed so widely from the usual calm sententiousness of the writer, that I felt sure the mystery was one to be solved with the universal key, and was persuaded that a woman was at the bottom of it.

This in no way interfered, however, with the idea that at once suggested itself to my mind. Schwarz was the very man I wanted. I could trust him perfectly; his singularly accurate knowledge of English would enable him to carry on the studies of my pupils, and his companionship would be very agreeable to myself; while the great work of translation in which he was engaged would progress rapidly under our united auspices. I wrote to him at once, and received a joyful acceptance of my proposals; and, at the end of a fortnight, he was an inmate of the vicarage, installed in the vacant chamber above the library, and entering heart and soul into his new duties. I found him greatly changed, however. His intellect had ripened; his moral and religious principles were perhaps even deeper and more earnest; but there was a cloud of profound melancholy, a dark despairing hopelessness in his views of life, which seemed to approach the verge of insanity. I soon perceived, however, that any allusion to his state of mind aggravated all its symptoms, and only made him shrink from me; so, as he performed all his allotted duties with zeal and energy, I was content to let matters take their course, and refrained from all allusion to a secret which in no way concerned our mutual relation.

Some months passed thus, and Hermann Schwarz was fully established in his position as a member of our family, and winning daily more of my esteem and confidence, when another guest arrived at the vicarage.

Easthwaite, the village in which I live, is situated on an extensive property belonging to the Duke of ——, who resides in a distant county; and, as the vicarage is the only place on the estate of higher pretensions than a farmhouse, his Grace's steward is in the habit of coming here twice in the year, to collect the rents, and settle any business that requires attention. He came on this errand at Michaelmas last, when Schwarz had been nearly a year in my family; and, as usual, the library was given up to him as a business-room. When the greater part of the rents had been collected, Mr —— received a summons to a distant part of the property, which would detain him till the next day; and, as this had happened more than once before, I undertook the charge of the money till his return. We counted it together, and took the numbers of the notes, which amounted to upwards of L.1000, besides about L.200 in gold and silver. It was deposited in a drawer of the library-table, of which Mr —— took the key when he went away. He had not been gone more than an hour or two, when I received a telegram from my wife's father announcing the dangerous illness of her mother, and requiring our immediate presence. I own that this sudden intelligence, and the distress of my dear wife, drove all thoughts of the duke's rents from my mind; but I remembered them while giving some parting directions to Schwarz, and added: ‘When Mr —— returns, Hermann, tell him I was sorry to desert my post in his absence, but that I left you in charge as my substitute.’

We had a long and anxious journey; but better news awaited us at the end of it, and after the fatigue of the day, I slept soundly. Early on the following morning, I received another telegram, containing these startling words: ‘Your house has been burned: come at once!’ The terrible laconism of this message, leaving me in doubt as to the safety of almost all that was dear to me in the world, filled me with a sickening dread; but resolved to learn the truth at once, and unwilling to leave such a fearful weight of suspense on the mind of my wife, I simply told her that, finding our fears as to her mother's state relieved for the time, I thought it better to return home at once, as several matters required my attention, which had been neglected in our hurried departure.

I found Schwarz waiting at the station; and in reply to the questions I had scarcely power to utter, he hastened to assure me that the children and all the inmates of the vicarage were safe, and that the damage was confined to the old portion of the house.

‘The library and my room are burned,’ he said, ‘and the rest more or less injured; but the fire was soon got under, and the people from the village worked like giants; you should have seen *how* they worked for love of you.’ He was very pale and excited, and his right hand was bound up, while he confessed to many other burns and bruises, though he made light of it all. I saw he was feverish and suffering, and insisted on his going to take some rest as soon as we arrived.

The first sight of the charred and defaced appearance of my happy, peaceful home affected me powerfully; and escaping from the chorus of anecdotes and explanations with which the children and pupils assailed me, I turned into a side-walk in the garden to compose my thoughts. Suddenly, I found myself face to face with Mr ——, the duke's steward, and the thought of the large sum of money which had been deposited in the library rushed into my mind for the first time when I saw his pale and disturbed countenance. I felt rather ashamed of owning my forgetfulness, as I inquired whether the money had been saved, though with little hope of hearing a satisfactory reply.

‘Not one penny!’ he exclaimed in an excited manner. ‘Mr Smith, this occurrence is a very grave one, for you, for me, and all concerned; and I feel it my duty to tell you that I have telegraphed to London for a detective. Mr Schwarz was in a very excited state when I arrived, and tried to persuade me that the fire originated among a quantity of papers which I tore and threw into the grate yesterday before leaving; but I remember perfectly watching them burn; and they were entirely extinguished, and the fire was almost out before I left the house.’

‘I have heard nothing as yet of the supposed origin of the fire,’ I remarked. ‘I did not like to question Schwarz, seeing the state of fatigue and suffering he was in; and, to own the truth, the safety of the children was so great a blessing that I had scarcely realised it fully when I met you.’

‘There is not much to be gleaned from the servants or the villagers,’ said Mr ——. ‘I have spoken to most of those who helped to extinguish the flames, and all they know is, that the library was “all of a blaze,” and Mr Schwarz's room partially burned before the alarm was given. I have got two of the villagers to watch the ruins till the arrival of the detective from London; you will, I hope, excuse my having taken these measures on my own responsibility, but I felt that I was answerable to his Grace for the money that has been lost; and we may, at least, recover the gold and silver, though, unluckily, it forms a very small portion of the sum.’

Of course I repeated my assurance that I considered him perfectly right to take any steps that seemed to him advisable; and I then left him, feeling, in the perturbation of my mind at this sudden calamity, a need of solitude.

By the mid-day train, Inspector Park arrived at the vicarage, and the usual formalities of an inquiry into the origin of the fire were immediately entered into. The account given by the servants, who were first examined, agreed perfectly, and only went to establish the fact, that about three o'clock in the morning they were roused by Mr Schwarz with the news that the house was on fire. The three women who slept in the rooms over the kitchen deposed that they had heard no noise before Mr Schwarz knocked at their doors, and told them to rise, but not to be alarmed, as they were in no danger. Of course this assurance produced no effect; and as the kitchen-maid remarked, ‘We just screeched right on till we got some clothes together and out of the house.’ Then the cook went into hysterics, and required the attendance of both her companions; so the female part of the establishment was kept employed, and out of the way. The nurses and children, who occupied a part of the more modern house, far removed from the scene of danger, were not even disturbed; and the pupils, roused by Mr Schwarz, worked heartily under his orders, and seem to have considered the whole affair simply as a bonfire on a large scale, got up for their especial amusement and delectation. The men-servants, as well as all the people from the village who turned out to their assistance, spoke warmly of Mr Schwarz's cool courage and composure. He would not even attempt to save his own possessions in the room above that in which the fire originated; but one of the men, at some considerable risk to himself, entered it when the floor was already beginning to burn, and brought away all that he could see on the tables. He was just leaving the room as a part of the floor fell in; the flames spread rapidly, and were only arrested by the thick brick wall of partition which contained the kitchen chimney. By dint of unremitting exertion, the fire was thus confined to the library and two rooms above it, but these were completely destroyed.

The servants having finished their statements, Inspector Park begged to see Mr Schwarz. I told him that, by my desire, he had gone to take some rest, and proposed adjourning to his room, in order to disturb him as little as possible. After some delay, he admitted us; and writing materials on the table, together with a sealed packet and a strong odour of burnt sealing-wax, shewed that he had been otherwise occupied than in taking the rest which he so greatly needed. He was extremely pale, and kept his right hand in a handkerchief which he had put round his neck as a sling. When we were all three seated (for Mr ——, the steward, accompanied us), Schwarz said, turning to Inspector Park:

‘I suppose you wish to hear my account of this fire; I have very little to tell you. It is my practice, as Mr Smith knows, to write and study in my own room till a late hour; I was thus occupied last night, in one of the rooms which is now burned; and I was so deeply engaged, that I perceived nothing to alarm me, till smoke began to ascend between the boards of the floor. This attracted my attention, and I went below and found the library in flames. This is all I can tell you.’

‘Did you give the alarm at once on discovering the fire?’ asked the inspector.

‘No. My first thought was for some valuable books, which were in a book-case near the door; I removed these at once, and then roused the servants.’

'Why did you do this? Would it not have been better to have got assistance at once?'

Schwarz shrugged his shoulders.

'Can a man account for all his impulses? I thought first of the danger of these books, which, as Mr Smith will tell you, could scarcely have been replaced for money; when they were safe, my thoughts turned in the direction they should perhaps have taken at first. I did what I did for the best.'

'I am sure of that,' I said warmly; for I could not but be touched at his care for the books, a few rare editions which he knew I valued highly; and I cut short, rather unceremoniously, some remark of Mr ——'s, which I thought was intended to cast blame on my friend Schwarz for not remembering the money in the library-table.

The inspector asked a few more questions, and then rose, saying that he must examine the ruins before returning to London, which he was anxious to do by the evening train. We found some men still occupied, by Mr ——'s orders, in throwing buckets of water on the débris, to enable him to make a search for the gold and silver; and made our way with some difficulty over charred and smoking heaps, and among pools of water, to the scene of the men's operations.

I watched with interest the sharp glances with which Inspector Park examined every object, and was struck with a sudden gleam of expression, as his eyes fell on a part of the room where the hearthstone yet remained in its place. He beckoned to me by an almost imperceptible sign, and pointed downwards.

I noticed that a portion of the boards near the hearthstone were still unconsumed, and the grate appeared in the same state as I had left it.

'The fire did not begin here,' the inspector said in a whisper. Suddenly he stooped and picked up some small object.

'What is that?' I inquired anxiously; for a *something* in his manner caused me to think he had made an important discovery. He did not answer at first, but stooped again; and then said, in a low voice:

'Mr Smith, I should like to speak to you alone, if you please.'

I led the way to the garden, but he did not open his lips till we reached an arbour at a little distance from the house. Then he stopped; and looking carefully round, he said, coming close to me, and speaking very low:

'That fire's been the work of an incendiary.'

'Impossible!' I exclaimed.

'True, for all that,' he answered composedly; 'and here's the evidence.'

He drew three small coloured sticks from his pocket, apparently the remains of some kind of match, but unlike any in use in the house.

'You observed, sir,' he continued, 'that the fire had not touched the grate; consequently, it cannot possibly have originated there. I found them matches among the ashes in the fireplace; they were thrown there after the fire was out; consequently, again, they must have been used to light summat else; and that summat was the fire as burned the rooms.'

'But who could have done it?'

'I can tell ye that, too,' said the man, a pleased consciousness of his own acuteness contending strangely with the grave look of one about to make a serious charge, which he will be required to prove: 'it were the German gent upstairs!'

'Oh, no, no!' I said in haste. 'I would as soon believe that I did it myself.'

'Them matches,' continued Park, now fairly mounted on his professional hobby, and disregarding my interruption—'them matches is of foreign make; I've seen the like of them often before; and the gent upstairs lighted his candle with such a one not a quarter of an hour ago.'

'How *can* you tell that?'

'Saw them on the table,' he replied quietly; 'one on 'em is lying beside the candlestick; and one that he dropped—a green one, I think—is on the carpet, close to the foot of the table.'

'But that is no proof that he did it,' I said impatiently, for the man's air of quiet conviction was too much to bear. 'Remember that this is a very serious charge indeed; how can you tell, even supposing the fire to have been anything but accidental, that some other person may not be guilty?'

'In course, that is possible; but I've been running over the facts in my mind, and there's enough against this gent to warrant my taking him into custody on suspicion.'

'This is really dreadful,' I said, in great distress. 'Surely you must require something stronger in the way of proof before taking such a step.'

'Circumstantial evidence,' he said, emphasising each syllable of the words, 'is mostly all we has to go on in such-like cases; but it is very seldom that it deceives us; generally, facts come out on examination that strengthen the case. Things like them,' looking at the matches he still held in his hand, and which he now folded carefully in paper, and placed in his pocket-book—'things like them generally tells truth, and is often more to be depended on than witnesses: you can't prevent *them* from speaking out.'

I felt sick at heart. There is something in the accent of conviction that carries its own impression with irresistible force to the mind; and I felt that this man, expert as I knew him to be in unravelling many a tangled web of mystery and crime, firmly believed himself to have discovered the truth. Still, I would not abandon all hope, and requested permission to have some conversation with Schwarz before these dark suspicions were made known to him, in the hope that he might be able to account, in some satisfactory manner, for the discovery of the matches. After some hesitation, and upon my promising to communicate the result of our conversation at once to him, the inspector consented to my seeing Schwarz alone. With a heavy heart I went to his room, and found him still seated in the arm-chair where we had left him. I noticed that he hurriedly replaced his right hand in its sling as I entered, making an excuse for my intrusion by asking him what had become of the pupils, as I had not seen them since the morning.

'I gave them leave to go to Horsley Copse,' he said. 'You remember they were to be allowed a holiday to gather nuts; and as we could have done nothing to-day, I thought it would economise their time.'

'True,' I remarked; and then came an awkward pause. I looked on the table, and there lay a match, the precise fellow of one of those found by the inspector; and near the leg of the table, I saw the green one on the ground. I sighed.

'My kind friend,' Hermann said affectionately, 'some weight is on your mind; what is it?'

'Do you mind recapitulating to me exactly how you passed the day yesterday, Hermann?'

'Certainly not. After you left home, I went to the library, and locked the door, and put the key in my pocket. Then the boys and I took our usual walk, and had tea, and went through our evening studies. When they went to bed, I retired to my own room, and was occupied in my translation till alarmed by the fire.'

'And you did not write or seal letters in the library, or light a candle there after I went away?'

'I did not.'

'This box of matches is yours, I suppose?' I took up one I saw on the table, and, on opening it, found a number of the matches with coloured sticks. I looked at Schwarz as I spoke, and it seemed to me that a sort of spasm passed over his face: he clenched the hand he held in its silken sling.

'They are mine.'

'Hermann, a very unpleasant circumstance has occurred: some matches precisely like these have been found in the ruins below, and a painful conjecture has been formed in consequence.'

'You mean that I am suspected of having caused the fire?'

His voice was so hollow, so unlike itself, that I looked anxiously at him; there was a strange wild determination in the gaze with which he met mine.

'It is quite true; I did so.'

'Good Heavens!' I exclaimed, starting up, 'you are mad!'

He remained quietly seated, and a sad smile passed over his face. 'Not now; it did not last long; but time enough to work much mischief. I should like to tell you my story before you give me up to justice.'

I sat down again without a word; it seemed to me that I must be dreaming. He continued quite calmly, as if speaking on some every-day matter.

'I ought to have told you, when I accepted your friendly offer, made so warmly and generously, that I was a changed being from the Hermann Schwarz you knew some years ago. I feel now that I have not acted loyally towards you; but the temptation of your offer was too great, like the other temptation to which I yielded yesterday. The devil has been growing in me, and he is now very strong. Soon I shall no longer be able to wrestle with him; but, in the meantime, I must tell you my story.

'I have always been poor, but I never felt my poverty. Since my parents died, I had been able, by exerting the faculties which God gave me, to make my brain support my body, and I required no more. I had one kind friend, my godfather, Hermann Rüdiger, the great bookseller at Berlin; for him I worked cheerfully many years, translating, revising, and correcting books intrusted to him for publication. He it was who first suggested to me a course of study with a view to the translations on which I am now occupied; and I pursued this course with ardour, for a new motive added tenfold strength to my exertions.' Here he paused, and passed his hand across his brow. His voice faltered a little as he resumed.

'I saw her very rarely. It was Sophie, Rüdiger's only daughter. I do not know how it happened that I loved her, worshipped her, so that the least glimpse of her face, the very touch of her dress, as she passed me, made me tremble with a joy that was almost suffering. I do not know either how she found it out, or how I first began to think it possible that she—she—might love me too. All this happened in the time past, and there seems a fathomless gulf between *then* and *now*. But I *do* remember the day on which we spoke of love; it was under the lime-trees, on the evening of the king's fête, when there were fireworks and illuminations in the town. There was a crowd of people, and we were separated from her parents; and when I asked her if she was frightened, she looked up, and said: "Not with you." Then I found words to tell her how I loved her, and she listened; and we forgot the crowd, and her parents, and all but the wide paradise of love in which we two seemed to stand alone, hand in hand. But Frau Rüdiger came up, and scolded Sophie for leaving her, and the dream was over. The next day, I took courage, and went boldly to her father, and told him all; he listened without speaking; and when at last I asked if he would give me any hope that in time, when I could support a wife, Sophie might be mine, he answered very quietly: "Listen, Hermann. Sophie is my only child. She will possess, at my death, all I have in the world; and her mother and I are agreed that we will not interfere with her choice of a husband, provided he is a worthy man, and can bring proofs of honesty and industry. Now, at your age, I had made five thousand thalers; when you have made as much, come back and speak to me again on this subject, and I may listen to you. Now, this was like my death-warrant. How could I make five thousand thalers, when all the work of my life was only sufficient to keep me alive? I looked at him, and saw he was laughing. "O my God, Herr Rüdiger," I cried, "do not jest with me! You know you might as well ask me for a crown for Sophie. Let me work for you as I have done, and when my translation is finished, give me nothing for it but Sophie."

He started up when I said this, and raged and stormed; accused me of ingratitude, deception, audacity, I know not how many crimes, and turned me from the door. That evening I received from him a small balance of money that he owed me, together with a letter of introduction to a bookseller at Vienna, and a few sharp sarcastic words, recommending me to change the air, for that decidedly that of Berlin did not agree with my health. I believe, when I read these lines, the devil entered into me, and has never left me since. I tore his letter into a thousand pieces, as he had torn the hopes, the aim, the object of my life, into useless fragments; but since he cast me off, I resolved to shew him I was at least free to come or go as I pleased. Instead of leaving Berlin, I beset Herr Rüdiger's house by day and night, hoping to catch a look or a word from Sophie; but I never saw her again. At last, Lisa, the cook, taking pity on my despair, told me that Frau Rüdiger had gone with her to the country, I know not where; that Sophie had cried very much, and was ill when she went away, but that she, Lisa, heard nothing said about their return. It was then that I wrote to you; the devil was so busy in my heart and brain that I felt I should go mad if I stayed in Berlin; and I had no friend, no hope, no means of living elsewhere. Your kind letter, the delicacy with which you avoided all inquiry into the cause of my sorrow, and the friendly goodness of your proposals, seemed like a new life to me; and for a time, in the interest awakened by my occupation here, and the pleasure of feeling that I was useful to you, my kind friend, I almost forgot my grief, and tried to hope. But by and by the thought of Sophie and our eternal separation revived, and the devil woke up again within me. What I have suffered, how I have struggled, none can ever tell, and as it has all been in vain, it is useless to talk of it; but, believe me, Smith, I never thought of a crime—I only strove to fight with my devil, and keep him down, so that he should not interfere with the duties I owed to you; and I should have done so but for that fatal money. And now I come to the only part of my story which you can care to hear. Last night, after the boys had gone to bed, and while I was writing in my own room, the sudden thought came over me that there, in the room below, was all the money I wanted to gain Sophie, and be a happy man, lying in a drawer, with no one to defend it, and that I had only to put forth my hand and make it mine. Now the devil rose stronger than ever: instead of being within me, I felt him by my side, shewing me Sophie, as I saw her in the one happy evening of my life, smiling and looking up in my face with a soft blush in her own. It would be her happiness I should make as well as my own, with this money which belonged to one who would be just as well without it, and which would be life, and love, and happiness to me.

'I resisted long. I took out my pistol, and loaded it, and told the devil plainly that I would sooner shoot myself than do this thing. But he only laughed, and asked who would be the better for that; and I felt that he would get my soul, and that was what he wanted; so I resolved to disappoint him. At last, however, he conquered. I went to the library, and broke open the drawer, and took out all the notes. When I saw the broken drawer, I wondered how I could have been so foolish, when the thing must be discovered at once; but the devil was prepared for this too, and advised me to set fire to the room. This pleased me, for I thought that my room would burn also, and then no one would believe that I was guilty of such folly, for I did not think of the wickedness at the time. So I removed your books, and then put the broken chips of the drawer into a basket full of torn papers, which stood under the table, and set fire to them. I remember now that I threw the matches into the grate; but if I had thought about it at all at the time, I should have felt sure that all would burn together, and no trace be left. So I stood and watched the fire till I was sure it was burning well, and then I went up stairs, and sat in my room, and counted over the bank-notes. I put them in a parcel with a letter to a friend of mine, Johann Strauss, in London, who is in a merchant's office, and begged him to send them to Herr Rüdiger at Berlin. Then I began to write to Sophie; but my brain whirled, and my eyes were dim, and I saw smoke stealing up through the boards, and then I ran to the servants' rooms, and gave the alarm of fire. It seems strange that from that moment till the time when it was all over, and Mr —— arrived, and said we must telegraph to you, and raved and swore about the duke's money, I had forgotten all about the notes, and did not know or care whether they were burned or not. However, when I came to this room, I found my open desk, with the parcel lying upon it, and all the things that I had left on my table. So, when I went to the station to meet you, I took my letter to Strauss, and put it in the post; but after I had done this, I could not rest. The devil raged in me worse than ever; and when you sent me to take some repose, I sat down and wrote, first to Sophie, and then to you, for I determined that you should know all after I was gone.'

'And why did you not make your escape at once?' I inquired, shuddering; for I saw that, mad or not—and I firmly believed he *was* mad—poor Schwarz must be apprehended for the crime of which he so calmly confessed himself guilty.

'I *have* made my escape,' he answered, with a strange smile.

'I am glad to hear it,' I said, thinking it best to humour him; 'then you will have no objection to remain quietly where you are for the present: rest will be good for you.'

'Very; it is rest that I require,' he answered languidly, leaning back in his chair, while I hastened to tell Inspector Park of the sad discovery I had made.

'I thought as much,' was all I could elicit from the imperturbable detective. 'And now, if you please, sir, I must take the gent into custody, and be off.'

'Oh, surely you will not take him away in such a state!'

'Best on all accounts,' he replied. 'He didn't ought to be left alone for a minute, or he 'll be likely enough to do himself a mischief.'

Suddenly the thought struck me that some meaning of this kind might lurk in the words used by poor Hermann but a few minutes before, and I rushed upstairs. He had not moved, but was sitting precisely in the same position, except that his head was sunk a little forwards; and yet his attitude was not one of Despair.

'Hermann,' said I, sorrowfully; but he did not speak. I caught sight of a little phial held fast in his fingers, which was answer enough, without bidding these clenched teeth of his to open. He *had* made his escape, poor fellow, from madness and misery, and was gone where he would be judged by the light of perfect truth and unfailing mercy.

There is nothing more to tell. On his table were found a letter, painfully written with the left hand, to Sophie Rüdiger, and a melancholy farewell to me. These I enclosed, with a few words, communicating his wretched end, and sent them to Herr Rüdiger, after the coroner's inquest had returned its verdict of 'temporary insanity,' and my poor friend's remains were laid in a lonely corner of the churchyard. Mr —— telegraphed the number of the notes to London, and stopped them before they left Johann Strauss's hands. And now the vicarage is repaired, and I have another assistant, the Rev. Augustine Cope, who keeps the pupils, the parish, and the vicar himself in stern and primitive order. He is talented, energetic, and, I truly believe, a man of deep and sincere piety; but I often sigh as I look round my new library, and think of the lost translation of the Latin Fathers, and of its erring and most unhappy author, my poor friend, Hermann Schwarz.

THE MONKEY WORLD.

It is not unreasonably objected to Learning of all kinds, and to Science in particular, that they explode beliefs that are pleasant, and exchange romance for dull reality; that they give us new lamps for old ones, when we do not wish to be put under any such doubtful obligation. It is possible that Bloody Mary may have been an estimable, and even exemplary female monarch, but we had much rather not be persuaded of it; that Richard I. was a brutal brigand, but we cling to his old character of the Lion-heart; or that Richard III. was unusually straight in the back, but we do not thank the historian for telling us so. The foes of our Nursery literature, headed by General Timbs, with his *Popular Errors* and *Things not Generally Known*, may do their worst, but, as a general rule, we like our errors, and (with many thanks) we don't want to know any better. We confess that the prospect of a perusal of even a new illustrated work upon Natural History did not inspire us with unalloyed satisfaction. We anticipated a formal introduction to animals with obscurely derived classical titles, difficult of pronunciation; that if we saw a Slug depicted, we should have to call it a Mollusc, or if a Lobster, that it would be entitled nothing less than an Articulate. Moreover, we dreaded a complete but most undesirable refutation of marvellous facts related of our favourite beasts, and, in short, a scientific treatise of perhaps a reliable, but certainly a disagreeable character.

In the now issuing volumes of Mr Wood,* however, there is nothing of this overwhelming sort. It has been his endeavour to render the study of Animal Life as entertaining as possible, laying more stress upon habit and disposition than upon organisation, and describing species rather than genera; while the excellent artists who are his coadjutors have brought the various animals before our eyes, in pictures, which have all the advantages of real life with safety superadded. Even upon paper, however, some of these creatures, such as the Gorilla, inspire very considerable awe, if not respect. The hideous parody on Man which it exhibits in its form and structure, the brute ferocity of its countenance, its dreadful hind-paws furnished with their enormous thumbs, combine to render this animal terrible indeed. The popular riddle, a little altered, of 'Which would you rather a lion killed you, or a gorilla?' would, we imagine, meet with an unhesitating answer from all. How revolting must be the hug of those hairy limbs, when the hind-feet are clasped around the victim's neck, and the diabolical grinning countenance bent downwards to gloat over his dying agonies! In Western Africa, this creature pursues his peculiar game, as our own sportsmen do, not for the sake of the flesh, but from sheer delight in the amusement. 'The natives of the Gaboon country hold the gorilla in great dread, fearing it even more than the lion itself, on account of its furtively murderous disposition. Concealed among the thick branches of the forest trees, the gorilla, itself unseen, watches the approach of the unsuspecting negro. Should he pass under the tree, woe betide him; for the gorilla lets down its terrible hind-foot, grasps its victim round the throat, lifts him from the earth, and finally drops him on the ground, dead! Sheer malignity must prompt the animal to such a deed, for it cares not to eat the dead man's flesh, but finds a fiendish gratification in the mere act of killing. It is a kind of sporting, though the game is of a better quality than that which is usually chased over the fields, shot in the air, or hooked out of the water; not to be eaten, but for the sport.'

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* Routledge's *Illustrated Natural History*. By the Rev. J. C. Wood.

The gorilla, if we may trust to the artist, is so pre-eminently frightful, that his ugliness cannot be said to be only skin deep; his hateful anatomy even, when placed by that of a man, making the human skeleton —which is certainly not in itself an attractive object— quite charming by contrast. It is a relief to turn from this quadrumana—and if we knew a harder name, he should have it—to the consideration of his amusing brethren, the monkeys; about whom Mr Wood tells us some excellent new anecdotes, and never disturbs our happy faith in the old ones. Here is an ingenious method of theirs for crossing a river, impossible to human engineers, unless in those early days when, as some say, our race was provided with a caudal appendage. 'When a marching troop, often amounting to a hundred or more, arrives at the bank of a river, the principal body halts, while the oldest and most experienced of their band run forward, and carefully reconnoitre the locality. After mature deliberation, they fix on some spot where the trees of the opposite banks incline riverwards, and approximate nearest to each other. Running to the overhanging boughs, the most powerful monkeys twist their tails firmly round the branch, and permit themselves to hang with their heads downwards. Another monkey then slides down the body of the first, twines his tail tightly round his predecessor, and awaits his successor. In this way a long chain of monkeys is gradually formed, until the last, who is always one of the strongest of the troop, is able to plant his paws on the ground. He then begins to push the ground with his hands, so as to give the dependent chain a slight oscillating movement, which is increased until he is able to seize a branch on the opposite side of the river. Having so done, he draws himself gradually up the branches, until he finds one that is sufficiently strong for the purpose in view, and takes a firm hold of it. The signal is then given that all is ready, and the rest of the band ascend the tree, and cross the river by means of this natural suspension-bridge. So far, so good! The monkeys run over the bridge easily enough, but how is the bridge itself to get over? Their plight is very like that of the man who invented a system of iron doors to be closed from the interior, and who, after closing them in the most admirable and effectual manner, was obliged to open them again in order to get out. Still, whatever may be the case with human beings, when monkeys are clever enough to make such a bridge, they are at no loss to achieve the passage of the bridge itself. Two or three of the stoutest keep themselves in reserve for this emergency, and, attaching themselves to the last links of the living chain, relieve their comrade from his arduous task of clutching the boughs, and, at the same time, slightly lengthen the chain. They then clamber up the tree as high as the chain will stretch, or the boughs bear the strain, and take a firm hold of a tough branch. A second signal is now given, and the monkey on the opposite bank relaxing his hold, the entire line of monkeys swings across the river, perhaps slightly ducking the lowermost in the passage. Once arrived, the lower monkeys drop to the ground, while the others catch at branches, and break their connection with the much-enduring individual at the top. When the last monkey has secured itself, the leaders descend the tree, and the whole troop proceeds on their march.'

A number of suppositions arise out of this ingenious performance, beginning with, 'Supposing it true,' and ending almost nowhere; but we will only suggest this one: 'Supposing that a tail should *break*, what would become of the bridge and its passengers?' The strength of an edifice is only the strength of its weakest part, and surely, among such a number, there must be some weak or brittle tails, and even some that would pull right out under such extreme provocation, reducing their owners to a genus below the 'mandril,' who *has* a tail, though stumpy, and neither useful nor ornamental. The use of tails as respects the Old-World monkeys—for it is only in America, where no 'notions' are ever lost, that swing-bridges are made of them—is not yet discovered, and the only answer to the question, 'What does a monkey do with his tail?' is this: 'He nibbles it when at a loss for occupation.'

'It is a curious fact that—at all events, in captivity —the long-tailed monkeys *will* eat their tails, and nothing seems to deter them from this strange act. The tips of those members have been covered with plasters, and have been tied up in bandages, but without effect. The ends of the tails have been treated with aloes, cayenne pepper, and other disagreeable substances, just as the finger-tips of a nail-biting child are dressed. But though the creature splutters, and makes strange grimaces at the horrid flavours that greet his palate, he cannot refrain from the accustomed luxury, and perseveres in his nibbling. One great charm of this habit seems to be the excitement felt by the monkey in trying how far he can nibble without smarting for it. Whatever may be the cause, the effect is that the tail is gradually eaten up, in spite of all endeavours to prevent such a consummation. Considered in a social light, the tails are calculated to promote the merriment of the company, for they are admirable handles for practical jokes, and afford mutual amusement, not unmingled with indignation.'

Perhaps the most amusing picture in these early numbers of this book of Mr Wood's is that by Harrison Weir of the Sooty Mangabey, a most admirable sketch, which has so much of humour in it that we read the title, quite involuntarily, Mangy Boy. The combined misery and fun exhibited in this animal's face, and even attitude, are almost identical with what we see in those sharp and ragged London boys who haunt the corners of the squares, and turn 'head over tip for a halfpenny;' nor are their pursuits by any means dissimilar.

'Few monkeys can assume more outré attitudes than the Mangabeys, which seem to be, among monkeys, almost the analogues of the acrobats among mankind; and twist themselves into such strange contortions, that they seem to be able to dispense with the bones and joints with which other animals are furnished. They seem to be quite aware of their own accomplishments, and soon learn that their display will bring in a supply of nuts, cakes, and fruit to their exchequer. So they keep a vigilant eye on the visitors, and when they conceive that they have drawn attention to themselves, they execute a series of agile gambols, in the hope of meeting the reward which sweetens labour.'

This animal is pleasing in captivity, which his human congener (we have heard policemen say) is far from being; and when walking, its diverse colours produce a remarkable effect, especially when viewed from behind.

At Bindrabund, we are told—which name literally signifies a jungle of monkeys—a town a few miles distant from the holy city of Muttra, more than a hundred gardens are well cultivated with all sorts of fruit, solely for the support of the 'Rhesus' monkeys, which are maintained by religious endowments from rich natives. These objects of Indian veneration have a good deal of colour about them, their green and yellow ground being powerfully relieved by a very bright chestnut. The arms and shoulders are of a lighter tint, and change to dun below, while the callosities, which their tails make no attempt to conceal, are scarlet. Upon a certain very large tract of land called Cooch-Bahar, when the natives cut the grain, they always leave a tenth part for these animals; as soon as their portion is marked out, the variegated brutes come down from the hills, and carry it off, storing it under and between rocks, so as to keep it from vermin. They are held in such veneration as not only to be permitted to devastate the plantations at will, but to have a home prepared for them in the Hindoo temples, where they rule supreme, and tolerate the intrusion of no monkeys of inferior caste. To kill them is to commit more than murder; and if you would preserve your sugar-canes from their depredations, you must employ some such ingenious method as the following: 'One ready-witted Englishman succeeded in keeping the monkeys away from his plantation for more than two years, and that without using any violence, or offending the prejudices of the natives. He had planted a patch of sugar-canes, and had seen his growing crops eaten by elephants, swine, deer, monkeys, and other animals, without being able to guard the ground from the robbers. The heavier animals he excluded by means of a deep trench surrounding the cane-patch, and a strong palisading of bamboos just within the ditch. But the monkeys cared nothing for moat or wall, and carried off whole canes in their hands, eating them complacently as they proceeded to the shelter of the trees. For a long time this state of things continued, and the planter was doomed to see the ripening canes devoured in his very presence, and the chewed fragments spit in his face by the robbers. This last insult proved too great a strain for his patience to endure, and, after some thought, he hit upon a stratagem which answered even beyond his expectation. He chased a flock of the monkeys into a tree, which he then felled; and, by the help of his assistants, captured a number of the young, which he conveyed home. He then mixed some treacle with as much tartar-emetic as could be spared from the store, and, after painting all the young monkeys with this treacherous mixture, set them free. Their anxious parents had been watching for their offspring, and carried them away out of danger. The liberated captives were then surrounded by the whole troop, who commenced licking the treacle from their fur. Before very long, the expected effects made their appearance, and the poor monkeys presented a most pitiful appearance. The result of the affair was, that the monkeys were so terrified at the internal anguish which their depredations had caused them to suffer, that they fled the place, and not a monkey was seen in that locality until long afterwards.'

ULTIMA THULE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.

Is it possible this morning to get to Foula? The mountain summits of that *ultima regio* rise brightly from the calm sea; what wind there is, is fair; and as it falls to the lot of even few Shetlanders to set foot there, and an opportunity more favourable may not occur for months, this furthest Thule we must visit, four-and-thirty miles distant from Scalloway, and in the bosom of the wide ocean though it be. The good boat is well seasoned, the crew willing; the bread and the *bland*—the fermented *serum* of churned milk, the favourite beverage of the fishermen, and the oldest drink in Europe save cold water—can be ready in a twinkling. Off, then, Magnus; get the crew together, while we take a sketch of the old castle. Here are boys fishing in the fresh-water burn from the lake, and with an apparatus that it will gladden the heart of every school-boy who reads this page to be acquainted with. No clumsy *guddling* here; no *liming* of the water, destroying minnow and trout, parent and child together; but how effectual for capture, how ingenious, and yet how simple! A dam is built across the burn, with a gap in the centre. In this a funnel-shaped basket is fitted close at the narrow end, which is turned downwards, open at the mouth which faces the current, and formed on the spot of the long stalks of the docks and reeds that grow around. The happy urchins, entering the stream some forty yards above the machine, and wading downwards, poke under the banks as they advance, and drive the trouts downwards, which, when close on the dam, rush in their terror into the mouth of the trap, where, finding themselves unable to turn at its narrow end, they become an easy prey. Forty yards lower down, the instrument is set again; and sure we are, that had we known of the process in more youthful days, many a sparkling burn we have now in our eye would have less frequently disappointed us.

Reader! did you ever eat of a cat-fish? There is one, lazily feeding among the weeds under the very shadow of your boat, the most repulsive-looking monster the deep contains—a light slaty gray in colour, as if it had the plague; a yard in length; and with broad head and armed jaws absolutely hideous. There, the spear is in him, and he is tumbling and flapping on the hot pier; but what a power in his teeth! You lift him by the inch-thick board into which he has fastened them as you lift a terrier by the tail, and were your arm in those jaws, you would have a vivid idea of amputation. But what a delicacy the monster is! Had Apicius known of it, he would have visited Shetland on purpose to taste of it. If 'the delicious *lyre* that is found here, a bird of the size of a duck, but so fat that it seemeth all fat,' had power to warm the ascetic missionary we have already referred to into eloquence, what would he have said had he eaten of this stone-biter? We pronounce of it, as old Thomas Fuller did of the strawberry, 'Doubtless God *could* have created a better fish than the cat-fish, but doubtless He never did.' Before standing out to Thule, we must keep by the coast for ten miles, and what a magnificent coast it is! Vast mural precipices of gneiss, porphyry, granite, and a bluish-gray quartz rock, present a barrier against which, whether at high or low water, the waves dash themselves into spray for evermore; while, at frequent intervals, the cliffs part and retire to send up a broad winding creek to the sloping fields, or throw sentinels forward into the ocean in gigantic isolated masses; shaped at one time like triumphal arches, through which a full-sailed boat may pass; at another, like stupendous spires and massive citadels, whose steep and slippery sides the boldest climber never dares to attempt. We must not forget, indeed, that yon high and lonely rock that opens on us to the west of Papa Stour—the Lady's Rock—was not only a habitation once, but the couch of love. Whether from devotion or compulsion, the lovelorn daughter of an island-chief retired thither from the world; herself and her maidens, like the workmen who had built her bower, being conveyed to their *eyrie* by ropes, and left there, with the feeling on the part of the natives, who sailed past it with simple wonder and pious blessings, that by her presence and prayers she was fulfilling the office of their guardian angel. A signal for aid is at last made, and, lo! when they hasten to afford it, the saint is about to become a mother! A youth she had loved on the mainland, of humble birth, had, with the fearlessness of affection, scaled her retreat; and, though tradition does not mention if the maiden snood she had lost was ever replaced by the matron's curch, it does tell, that in the indignation of the islanders, her dwelling was instantly demolished, and its stones hurled from the rocks.

Now we have the tide in our favour, and are right on the course for Foula's mountains, on a sea whose perfect glassiness the light air which scarcely keeps the sail full never breaks, nor ripples the great mountain swell, on whose black lucent sides you rise and fall so luxuriously, with a single foam-bell. Looking back to the shores you are leaving, their stern and rugged grandeur comes clearly out, while here and there are ruins, perched on the cliffs, of Pictish and feudal towers, 'whose lonely walls, when they were young and proud,' sheltered not only power but beauty, and poetry, and chivalry; of which Torfæus affords us a peep more than seven centuries ago.

Here we are at Foula and its narrow landing-place, after having been descried afar off by the simple natives, who crowd on the heights to scrutinise us. The women are foremost in curiosity, and yet there is something deeper than that in their expression. 'You are strange men' (*Anglice*, strangers), says one of them; 'are any of you doctors or ministers? A man is dying; O his poor body, his precious soul!' Our little party happened to comprise a specimen of both these professions; and accompanying the woman and the anxious band that had collected, we entered a hut, where, on a closed wooden bed, a poor man was tossing in agony from inflammation in the bowels. What remedies could be had were administered; a short and earnest prayer was preferred, amid pious ejaculations from the bystanders, and expressions from the poor sufferer of faith and hope; but on emerging from the smoky hovel, the demands for both temporal and spiritual healing were as incessant as if we had been in an Arab village in the desert. There is no doctor on the island. Their minister visits them for a fortnight once a year, to instruct the adults daily, and baptise their children, some of whom are of an age, when the ceremony is performed, to give expression to their feelings of surprise at the unexpected aspersion in terms more energetic than devout; '*Deil burn your fingers*' being the acknowledgment of an urchin for the baptismal services of his pastor. The children, however, are better instructed than their remote situation would suggest, a schoolmaster being provided for them by the Scottish Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, whose pupils, for beauty of feature, intelligence of appearance, and quickness of intellect, would compare advantageously with any children of their class.

But what magnificent cliffs these are! Old red sandstone in material, and sinking right down 1800 feet into the sea, so perpendicularly that a stone, detached with the foot, drops into its depths without a break. What myriads of birds! They occupy every ledge as thick as the pebbles on the beach. Cormorants lowest in place, then kittiwakes, gulls, guillemots, puffins, solan-geese, perched in successive rows on the shelves above; while the skutiallan, the freebooter of the colony, is seen pursuing every poor gull that has lately swallowed a fish, till the morsel is disgorged, to be caught by the robber in its descent for his own maw; or the bold arctic gull, it may be, intimates that you are unpleasantly near its nest, by a smart rap across the eyes with its wing, which for a time effectually spoils your enjoyment of the prospect. Yonder the eagle soars away, in circles that are ever higher and smaller, till it seems like a speck in the blue sky; and on that bold summit of rock, in calm majesty, sit two of his masters, the skua gulls. With the eagle, this noble creature, a dark-brown handsome bird, five feet sometimes from wing to wing, wages interminable and successful war, and protects so effectually the lambs from that tyrant's talons, that the islanders almost worship it as their guardian angel. When, a few years ago, some naturalists from London shot a couple of them, they narrowly escaped being thrown over the cliff by the angry multitude; and to any but skua gulls, these cliffs are indeed terrific. Observe that slender pin on the green-sward, where a space has become battered by human feet; to that, weak as it seems, the rope is fastened almost daily in the breeding-season, that lets down two or three men for a hundred fathoms after eggs and birds. Lives are frequently lost in the awful trade; but still, from the inborn spirit of adventure, they persevere in it, and though 'father *gaed ower*, and grandfather *gaed ower*,' as their phrase goes, the son is as ready for the descent as ever. A climber having lost hold of the rope, which he had drawn far from the perpendicular, while searching for eggs on the shelves of the precipice, and seeing it in its oscillations receding further and further from him, has been known to recover it by a desperate leap into mid air; and a story is related of a young man, who, seeing the strands of the rope breaking on which his father and brother were suspended below him, and shouting, 'Father, cut away Jamie!' no sooner found his sire hesitate, than, to save himself, he deliberately cut both off, to be plunged into the boiling ocean. It is fervently to be wished that such a case for the casuist, as to the defensibility of the act, may never occur again. Nor is there any necessity for these perils. A day's good fishing is more lucrative; and churlish as Nature is here in the distribution of her bounties; though she does not furnish a specimen of the vegetable world taller than the willow of an inch high; though the coleworts of the peasant have to be raised in circular enclosures on the hillside, that appear like a city of Pictish dwarfs at a distance; though for eight dreary months the sun is visible only for a few hours—yet, there is love in the heart, fire on the hearth, worth, and innocence, and hope around it, and a sweeter flower in the window than any rose that ever peeped into the lattice-panes of an Italian cottage—their loved and well-worn Bible. We leave them, for our twenty miles' row to the nearest point of the mainland, with respect and kindness.

What a toilsome and weary row it is! Midnight is past ere we reach the shore; and though we can read the smallest print, as in broad day, yet the rocks of this dark bay in which we ride form a shady place, and the white foam leaps up on them so wildly on every side, that the narrow landing-place is difficult even to discover. We shall wait till the sun appears; he has scarcely, indeed, gone to bed; the last yellow radiance of his setting still lingers on the horizon; and though you can trace his progress below it by a well-defined band of reflected light, there is yet a gloom on the bay that will make his rising welcome. How sweetly that low psalm the boatmen spontaneously raise—

> I to the hills will lift mine eyes,
> From whence doth come mine aid,

harmonises with the scene; how plaintive the first call of the awakening sun-bird; and how gladly do we hail the light that at length appears, apparently not more than a mile from the spot it sank in, and shews us where we may land with safety. Yonder is a manse; we are reluctant, so early, to disturb its inmates, but we know if we distrusted their hospitality, unknown to them though we are, it would never be forgiven. We knock; a female servant appears in deshabille, and vanishes, but soon returns to shew the way to the parlour, and promise breakfast; and, lo! our reverend host, and, lo! his lady-like and gentle partner, rising at three in the morning, in full dress, to receive strangers, and leave an impression on our memory of their hospitable kindness that will not readily be effaced.

What a strange group in a manse parlour sometimes meet in a summer evening! Inns in the country there are none, the landowners seldom live on their estates, and the house of the minister, in consequence, is the rendezvous to which all resort, and—slender as is the maintenance of the reverend man—never in vain. Here is a geologist, with all manner of precious things in his ample pockets; magnetic ore from Fetlar, and porcelain earth; asbestos and chromate of iron from Unst, with the pleasant story of the minister's dike on his ready tongue. That worthy man having entertained the captain of a trading vessel from the south, who had known a thing or two, found his guest take a wonderful fancy to the stone of his fence as ballast, on account, he said, of the little room it occupied in his hold, and having offered to replace it by a wall equally substantial, was allowed to take a portion of it away with him. A few months saw him return for a similar appropriation; but when a third time he appeared, the suspicions of even the simple-hearted pastor were awaked by this visitor's strange fancy for his garden-dike; and he found at length he had been parting, for its weight in rubbish, with material worth L.15 per ton, to form the brilliant yellow pigment to decorate an Edinburgh or London carriage! while along with this story our geologist relates·how profitably and skilfully conducted the workings now are. We have an antiquary to take up the tale, who has visited fortified islands and Pictish burgs—*πυργοῖ*—towers, and at Bressay and Weisdale found mounds, whose calcined stones and rich loamy earth, stone axes, and arrow-heads, clearly confirm the tradition that they were used by the Scandinavian inhabitants as the burning-places of their dead. A herring-curer is then eloquent on fish; and the worthy host is lamenting the folly of his parishioners in scalping the hills for soil near every village, and leaving the rains to wash away what they leave behind, till they reduce smiling pastures to the bare and bleached rocks that so conspicuously offend the eye at Lerwick. Then come worship and the simple supper, and kindly good-night from all. This hospitality, from the isolated position of the islands, cannot often be abused, and is never grudged. When a stranger, whose errand and position are recognised, is known to be in a district, every family, indeed, is looking out for him; while they can teach the impertinent and intrusive at the same time with quiet dignity that they feel the burden of their presence. An adventurous shopman, it is related, who had been buying hosiery in Lerwick, presented himself, not so much from the love of scenery or pursuits of business, as from vanity, at a gentleman's house, where there were handsome daughters, for a lodging for the night. It was willingly and kindly accorded; but when days passed on, and the youth still lingered, professing to be charmed with the ladies' playing and their Norse songs, and still asking, even during the day, for another and another; 'Sing the gentleman *myrkin i livra*,' said a modern Brenda to her sister, 'and I shall translate it for him.' The old chant was sung accordingly, while the bagman was all admiration. *Myrkin i livra, lurein i luingu; tinrin i guestin, i geunga.* 'How beautifully expressive that must be,' cried he, with admiring rapture; 'do translate!' 'It is indeed expressive,' said the lady addressed; 'it means, "It is dark in the chimney, but it is light along the heath; it is time for the stranger to be gone,"' while both rising at the same time with a profound courtesy, left the poor hosier to adopt the hint with what expedition he could.

> They played to him, they sang to him, as he had been their brither;
> Now he maun flee from Coningsburgh, hose and a' thegither!

But, good reader, these fair singers are friends of ours, and we must engage their company to the chief antiquarian gem of Shetland—the famous *burg* of Mousa. 'Not,' says Brenda, 'but on one condition—that you take us to the cradle of Noss, and the Orkneyman's cave at Bressay.' 'By all means; they are worth a visit, and only a few miles from Lerwick.' On we scud before the breeze. We pass those magnificent sea-coves in the sandstone rock that suggest the idea of Egyptian temples, so high, regular, and solemn are their dark portals. Now we are under the Noss, where we look up with wonder at the vast rock that towers 500 feet above us, covered with sea-birds, which a shout raises in countless myriads, and remark how quaintly these foolish guillemots continue to look over their rocky shelves, each like a goose peeping with one eye into a bottle, and how it throws down, in its folly, its one darling egg as it rises, making the sea around us splash like a hail-shower. How watchful is that sentinel gull over its herd of cormorants, and how certainly would it flap yonder sleeping seal with its wings, if it did not rouse itself at its scream, and plunge sullenly into the water! Well, here is the Orkneyman's cave. We have torches in plenty, and even fireworks, and lighting the former, in we row. How magnificent the entrance! how clear the water in the torchlight! how beautiful the smooth cream-coloured spar-casing that lines the walls! how fantastic the figures it has formed in the shelves of the rock it covers! Here is a tomb with a sainted nun lying stretched upon it; there is an angel with outstretched wings on the vaulted roof; here an altar and shrine beautiful exceedingly! and now, in the strong glare of these Roman candles we have lighted and placed on the ledges, and that light up the whole vast recess, water, and walls, and roof, and those mysterious passages beyond into which the close air warns you not to penetrate, form a picture to remember for ever. But to the low shelf yonder, now that we are in daylight again, whence an ascent to the summit of the cliff is practicable. So, ladies, steady; here we stand by the cradle. Below us is a precipice 170 feet in height, and beyond us a green holm, rising smooth and perpendicular from the water to an equal elevation, while over the tremendous gulf between, of 65 feet span, courage and ingenuity have stretched two strong cables, on which is suspended, by pulleys passing through the corners of the machine, a vast square box, called the cradle, and in this the adventurer pulls himself across to the further side, to secure the eggs and young of sea-birds, whose nests are so thickly placed that it is almost impossible not to tread on them. The eggs, we believe, bring a high price for varnish and gilding purposes; and though the crossing appears perilous, and demands a cool head and strong arm, yet save to the daring climber who perished, after fastening the posts, to which yearly the ropes are still attached, no accident has occurred for years.

Away before the breeze, and ten miles to the southward, we find Mousa perched on its rocky platform by the sea. What a strangely shaped tower; it is some two-and-forty feet high, round, but narrowing in the middle, and expanding again towards the top, like an hour-glass or a dice-box; a decidedly ingenious arrangement, rendering the scaling of it at least impossible. But here is the square door; the stones uncemented indeed, but maintaining their place, and preserving the entrance of five feet high by three broad as sharp and well defined as if it had only been finished yesterday. How thick the walls are; for full fifteen feet we have stooped, and this circular hold inside, open to the blue sky overhead, is only seven good paces in diameter. An excellent store-room, certainly, for all the valuables they who needed its defence might be supposed likely to possess. But why those long pigeon-hole-like slits in the inner wall, placed at intervals so regular? One of them, some five feet from the bottom, has become enlarged, and we can climb up to it with an effort. How strange—the walls are double! There is a passage of three feet in width between them, which winds round and round till it reaches the summit, throwing a spiral gallery, in its course, round the whole building, to which these slits admit light and air, and where many a fine maiden has been forced for a time to make her couch, and many a mother, trembling for her safety, has heard the roar of assault without, and the shouts of her kinsmen, hurling their missiles on the invaders from the walls above. It was here, as Torfæus records, that in the eleventh century Dame Margaret, the widowed Countess of Orkney, sought a refuge with her paramour, Erland Jung, from the pursuit of Harold, her ashamed and indignant son, who, intercepting all supplies, and unable to storm the fort, sat down in moody resolution to starve the pair into surrender. The silver tongue of the seducer riveted him in his camp, however, and prevailed. 'Why make a friend useless, or an enemy unforgiving, at a time when your friends are but too few? Listen to the counsels of wisdom. I am willing even here to solemnise the nuptials of Dame Margaret with all honour, and prove your friend and follower unto death.' The proposal, seconded by the imploring gestures of the fair, though not youthful fugitive, prevailed. The marriage was celebrated on the wild rocks, and all sailed in amity and hope to Denmark. Such is the story connected with what is probably the very oldest tower in Europe. It is a decided advance on the Picts' houses of Caithness and Orkney, as the green conical mounds, with their circular fence of stone, their chimney-like apex, and small inner chambers, are called; and while its construction explains that of a ruin on a small island in the immediate vicinity of Lerwick, whose loose heaps could not be reduced to a plan without the help of such a guide, it appears to be of the age and character of a fort called Danish we once visited in the Hebrides, near Trumesgarry, in South Uist. A green holm, some hundred yards from the shore, had to be fortified, and how ingeniously did the ancient engineer proceed. A causeway is laid down at low tide of gigantic stones, not straight, however, but in zigzags, returning towards each other at sharp angles, which, though too far apart to be cleared with a leap by an invader, could be crossed at the same time by a spear, and prevent his progress. When the island is reached, a circular wall presents itself, even now of some five feet high; and with stout defenders within, a very serious obstacle to an assailant; but grant that he surmounted the barrier, he would only find himself within two walls of equal height, which converge to a central tower, as the spokes of a cart-wheel do towards the nave, enabling the assailed, from sides and centre, to pour down their missiles on the invader, who had become shut up, as in a pen-fold, for destruction. Though not a Gibraltar or Sebastopol, it is certainly an ingenious, and, so far as we know, a hitherto undescribed arrangement; and as standing between the earth-burrow of the Pict and the square keep and stately castle of later times, it appears not obscurely to connect itself with the spirit and the age of this *burg* of Mousa.

But it is now long past sunset. Away to Dunrossness. What noble cliffs! what majestic caves! and there is a seal gazing at us, with his strangely expressive and lustrous eyes, whose wife and family we should seek, were it a little earlier, in the cave yonder, but not now; we are at peace with all mankind, and even with 'tong-fish' and seals, in this solemn hour and lovely evening, the last we shall spend in Shetland. Willingly do we pledge Magnus, whose rough hand is raised to his eye as he drinks our health in his fisher-toast, 'Death to the head that wears nae hair!' Willingly do we forgive Old Andrew for his many sneck-drawing attempts on our purse and heart, and respond to the quaint prayer with which he tosses off his well-earned calker, 'God open the mouth of the gray fish, and haud his hand about the corn;' and heartily do we say farewell to the hospitable gentry, the pious clergy, the honest fishermen, the chaste and industrious maids of Shetland. We leave your wild shores with a glance of parting and thankful praise, and bless those gentle courtesies of life which give even a foreign shore the place of home in the heart, and shed a charm of enduring and hallowed power even around the intercourse of strangers.

MY FIRST PATIENT.

I WAS fairly started as a surgeon. A brass-plate, for which I had paid five shillings-and-sixpence, glittered that fact in the eyes of the passers-by. Not being anybody's son in particular, of course no one gave me anything but advice, of which article I have had so much of all kinds thrust upon me, by all sorts and conditions of men, that I have grown quite apathetic to it, and can bear any quantity without losing the one thing I started with in life—my temper. I had two or three elder friends in the profession (we surgeons always call it *the* profession, and so it is), and they used to say: 'Well, you know, Thomson, you have many things much against you; your appearance, your want of connection, your diffident manner, and incoherent speech, are all great obstacles to your success.' One suggested a white tie; another, that I should join some religious sect, wherein, perhaps, with luck, I might become a deacon; another, that I should take lessons in elocution; a fourth, that before I went any further, I should leave *the* profession. This was rather severe upon me, considering that I had been the *spes gregis* of my college, a prizeman of renown, and that, so far as anatomy went, I could find any nerve or artery in the body with my eyes blindfolded. There was just one old friend who had fought up into celebrity against the same drawbacks which I suffered from, and his views chimed in with my own.

'*Distinguish yourself, my boy,*' said Mr Nestor, F.R.C.S., 'and trust in Providence.'

Well, this was certainly good advice, but I wanted the *de quoi*, the wherewithal to render myself renowned. I knew by 'distinguishing' was meant attracting attention by surgical operations, so I set my knives in order, and looked about for a subject.

One morning soon after this my servant came in looking much surprised.

'There 's a—a *patient* for YOU, sir.'

'Eliza,' said I, 'you are a charming young woman: is it a lady or a gentleman?'

'I can't tell rightly, sir,' said she.

'Then shew the gentleman into the drawing-room.'

'He brought this note.'—'DEAR THOMSON—The bearer's leg is, I believe, the sort of article you require; if so, act accordingly. Yours truly,
J. NESTOR.'

The bearer was seated when I entered the drawing-room on a satin cushion which was the light of my landlady's eyes. He was an Irishman of the deepest dye; his face was sullen and apathetic, streaked with long rough locks, that fell from the margins of a flat table-mountain skull; the right foot was resting on a chair, and the left twisted in an eccentric manner, so as to plant its muddy heel well into the satin cushion before mentioned.

When I entered, his face assumed a meek and affectionate smile. He informed me that, 'glory be to the Vargin,' he had found at last a doctor that would cure his legs. 'Shure, shur, iverybody tells me that you 're the cliverest among them.'

I looked on, smiling blandly. 'What is your name?'

'Tim, shur, is my name; and an unlucky chap the owner o' the same has been since his boyhood.'

I examined the limb; it was hopelessly diseased, and afforded to a man of science one of those rare cases in which Duty and Pleasure would be combined. Perhaps he 'd let me take it off. Caution, however, was required. 'My good friend,' said I, my heart beating with excitement at my unusual relation to a fellow-creature—'my *good* friend,' I continued, 'this is a very bad leg.'

'Sho it is, shur; it 's yerself is a wonderful docthor, shure enough.'

'I fear it is but of little use to you.'

'Divil a haporth.'

'I fear keeping it on would endanger your health.'

A cloud came across his face. 'Is it cutting it aff, then, yer maning?'

'I fear such a course will'——

'That 's yer curing o' legs — gran' curing o' legs, bedad! Oh, holy Moses,' said Tim, picking up his crutches, and muttering, *sotto voce*, 'Bloody villin, murtherin divil! O I jist see him cutting it aff!'

I had been too precipitate, but presence of mind did not desert me. 'Tim,' said I, 'you must be hungry; go down stairs, and have some breakfast.' Down he went, and in a few minutes the basement story resounded with his laughter, mingled with poor Eliza's maid-of-all-work treble. On this young female coming up stairs, I said to her: 'Eliza, you must use your influence with that poor ignorant lad. He is at present dying from a disease in his leg, and his only chance for life is cutting it off; I'm determined to do it; and you must persuade him of the necessity; and, Eliza, never appear again in that cap. Here 's half a crown to buy another. Now, remember'—— At this moment, a stamping of crutches was heard, and the object of my affections was seen emerging laboriously from the area, evidently trying to escape. But I darted to the front door, and met him accidentally just dibbling away down the street. 'Ah, it 's you, Tim,' I said; 'by the way, I should like to draw your leg.'

'Is it to dhraw it straight?'

'No, no; make a picture of it. Eliza will be happy to see you at dinner; and here's a shilling. No; by the way, I 've not got my purse; but you 'll get it at dinner-time.'

We parted, and, on looking back, I saw Tim standing just as I left him, with his head on one side, like a parrot in a brown study, evidently trying to penetrate the real meaning of my invitation to dinner. He accepted it, however, and brought with him a handful of boot and stay laces, some cedar pencils, and a penny looking-glass, which formed his stock in trade as a hawker, in all of which articles Eliza and he transacted a little business. I called that seductive female again to my councils. 'Fairest among cookmaids,' said I (she was deaf, I may mention), 'where is that poor lad going to sleep?'

'Good gracious, sir!' said the young woman, 'how should *I* know?'

'Of course, of course; but don't you think it would be a charity to get him a bed at Mrs Slops's for the night?'

'Well, sir, perhaps; I 'll ask him.'

Now, Mrs Slops was an old sick-nurse, who let out a room for patients at a moderate weekly sum. She was a stern woman, with an alcoholic countenance, but knew her work well, and her duty, especially to herself. So I wrote to her as follows: 'DEAR MRS SLOPS—I hope your back-room is vacant just now, and that you will put up this poor lad for the night at my expense. After he is in bed, send his clothes out to air, as they are his only suit, and don't let him get up till I call to-morrow morning. Yours truly, JOHN THOMSON.'

'Ha, ha!' thought I, 'if she takes his clothes away, of course he can't well escape without them.' Next morning, I went along Beer Street, to see him, mentioning to friends on the way that I was making my *professional* rounds, and thereby causing considerable jealousy. There was a little crowd round Mrs Slops's door, and that eminent 'lady's nurse' was standing on the door-step holding the handle. The glazed hat of a policeman was bobbing nervously about, and, of course, the crowd were giving advice and information gratis, as all crowds do. 'Shame! Give him his clothes. What right have you to keep his breeches?' &c., were the remarks I heard; and the end of a crutch reaching sideways from the window, making blind thrusts at Mrs Slops, shewed me that it was my patient in a state of insurrection.

'O docthor, dear, what 's this at all? It 's Mrs Slops, shur, she 's got my breeches, and their pockets full o' goold. Where 's the polis? Polis!' roared poor Tim.

I went in, coaxed him back into bed, and discoursed with him about the leg. The excitement left him apathetic, and he seemed evidently tired of the subject.

'Och, then, I suppose ye know best; ye 've tuk my breeches, and the legs is but little use widout thim. Cut it aff, and my head into the bargain; and may the divil fly away wid you and that thafe o' a woman!' he continued, *sotto voce*, turning his face to the wall.

'Mrs Slops,' said I, 'that poor boy is now under your charge. We must be tender to the stranger and the unfortunate. I shall cut off his left leg to-morrow at noon.'

'Very well, sir,' said Mrs Slops. She 'd have said and looked the same had I told her to draw and quarter him.

I then wrote to Nestor, asking for his presence; dropped in on a few professional friends and said: 'By the by, I 've an amputation to-morrow in Beer Street, will you come?' Of course they would, and they did. They little knew it was my first. The operation is too painful for narration; suffice it to say that even Nestor patted me on the back when it was over, and poor Tim lay upon his bed in comparative comfort, and really glad now that his crippled leg had been removed. He continued to prosper, and grew daily in hatred of Mrs Slops.

'She dhrinks, shur, and then comes and makes faces at me; shure it 's little her mouth wants in crookedness widout that.'

He insulted this good woman in every way, and occasionally even me.

'Oh, ye're a fine docthor to take a poor boy's leg aff; will it grow again, d'ye think? Ye think the poor's no right to two legs, like the gintry; one's enough for a poor fatherless boy;' with an aside of, 'Shure it was a better leg than his own crooked shins. An' he'll put it in sperrits, and keep it in the window of his docthor's shop, like a big worm, the divil!'

Weary of this, I got a student to take charge of him, desiring there should be no restriction of food and other necessaries. I had other occupations just then; in short, I was about to be married, and a young mistress was coming to preside over Eliza and my little household. Of course, we took a tour, and vowed the most rigid economy. Potatoes and water, with an occasional dust of salt, were, we believed, quite sufficient for us, and far more than we desired. 'At all events, Cleopatra,' said I, 'our wine-bill won't be heavy; we are both almost water-drinkers; and as to spirits, except an occasional dash of whisky over some things I have in a jar, none will be required. By the way, I've heard from Joshua to-day, and he says poor Tim (Cleopatra had been good to Tim, and brought him on one occasion a strawberry ice, of which he nearly died from fright), is nearly well; and as we were away from home, he has sent him to our house for change of air.' This same house, I may mention, was a furnished one, which we rented from an old lady of great rigidity. She had never come nearer the poor than through the medium of a subscription-list, which her man-servant would carry in for her on a tray. This distinguished female hearing her tenants were from home, one morning took it into her head to inspect matters, letting herself in with a duplicate key. Eliza, who was our army of occupation, heard a frightful yell, a dump on the floor, a rapping of heels, and all the sounds of battle. She rushed up stairs into the bedroom, *the* bedroom, I repeat—the casket, in other words, which generally contained our jewel of a landlady: there was that august lady in hysterics; and making digs at her with his favourite weapon of defence, the crutch, from the bed—*the* bed—was Tim, who seemed to be possessed with a devil of suspicious indignation.

Eliza, with her usual amiability, had given him these quarters instead of the little closet on the ground-floor to which he had been consigned. I need not say this caused a quarrel of the most fearful description between our landlady and our unoffending selves. We have not spoken since on any subject; and the poor old soul revenged herself by charging us for damages to the uttermost farthing, and begging that we would look out for another residence. Another was accordingly obtained; and on the night we came home to it, we made a tour of inspection. In one of the best rooms we found Tim established, who begged us to walk in, and be at home; he was quite well by this time, and affected to grumble at being detained; which, as I had been endeavouring to get rid of him for two months, was rather hard upon me.

On coming home next afternoon, I found Cleopatra's usually beaming face covered with gloom. 'John,' said she, 'I *fear* I have been mistaken in you.'

'What's the matter, dear?'

'Look at this grocer's book, John,' said she gravely: 'two dozen bottles of brandy, at five shillings; and you telling me a little whisky to splash in a jar would be all the spirits we'd require. Then here's the poulterer's book—ducks and green pease and spring chickens, and all the most expensive things. The poulterer says Eliza ordered them for a sick gentleman living with us.'

Sick gentleman! Could it be Tim? Alas! it was too true. He had already separated business friends, and was now about to destroy the happiness of an innocent and loving couple. All the other bills were in proportion; and Mrs Slops fired off notes to me, at intervals of a few hours, for remuneration for injury to her feelings from bad language. I kept my own sorrows locked in my bosom, but they were great, inasmuch as Tim had helped himself to several suits of clothes, which he had converted into coin—truths which only came to light by degrees. He frightened the women into fits, besides, by his rage, so at last I said: 'Tim, you must go away.'

'I'm going, shur.'

'Where to?'

'Home to Oirland. Will yer honour write a letter for me?'

I did so, to his dictation:

'DEAR UNCLE—I'm coming home upon Tuesday, God willing, and hope to find you and aunt well; and tell her I hope she's able to keep the boys from night-roaming. She never could keep me.'

'Night-roaming, Tim; what's that?'

'Just roaming in the night, shur, wid the boys.'

'What for?'

'To do what the Society bids us, shur.'

'What's that?'

'Well, shur, ye see, when any gintleman wants another gintleman to be baten, he tells the Society, and we bate him for him, shur.'

'And who do you beat?'

'Well, shur, all kinds, but *collectors* principally, shur.'

So the letter was finished and despatched; and on Monday I paid him enough to carry him home, and said good-bye to him with a lightened heart. We continued to be reminded of him, however, by perpetual bills for expenses during his illness. Time, however, slipped away, and we began to forget this expensive incubus of a patient, when one of the servants rushed into the room, and sunk into a chair, crying out that she had seen Tim in the street. Cleopatra assumed at once a cold and injured air towards me. She had always said it would be so; this man would hang round my neck all my life, ruin me at last, and bring herself down with sorrow to the grave. Our friend called soon after, with an excessively sheepish expression of countenance, to ask if we knew where Eliza was. She had left us when he did, and they had spent the money I gave him, it seemed, in marriage festivities.

'And she called me names, shur, and I just *touched* her wid the crutch, in fun, ye know, shur, jist joking, and she's gone from me, shur; so I'm looking for her round the town.'

Eliza's partiality for this *diable boiteux* had been quite costly enough to me already to prevent my entering into the search with any enthusiasm.

'I want some money, shur.'

'You'll have no more from me.'

'Then give me the situation in the government ye promised me.'

'I promised no such thing.'

He thereupon raised a howl, mingled with threats and abuse, which lasted all the way down the street. He fell some time after this and hurt himself, in a distant part of the country, and, of course, wrote to me for money to take him HOME! I foolishly sent him some, but provided a room for him as far off as possible, and fortunately captured Eliza, and obliged her to be his nurse. He was very quiet and apologetic; but about midnight a violent ringing came to my bell, and Eliza's well-known voice was heard screaming under the window: 'Come to Tim—he's murdering everybody.'

'Ah, I *told* you so, John,' sobbed Cleopatra, as I dressed hurriedly, and went to arrest the progress of the massacre. My patient had suddenly imagined I was about to cut off his *other* leg, and had endeavoured to leave in the night-time; but Eliza, wise from experience, had hidden the crutch; so he was deprived of locomotive power, and, as might be expected, the excitement occasioned was immense. An old clergyman, whom Tim hated profoundly, had been called in to soothe him, and while he reasoned with him, Tim sat in an arm-chair before the fire, apparently listening with great respect; he was, however, holding the poker in the coals, and when it was hot enough, he pulled it out, and thrust it at his spiritual adviser. When I reached the scene of action, the holy man was cowering in a corner of the very small room, and Tim, supporting himself with the back of a chair and his sound leg, was just warming up his weapon for a fresh attack. My promise to let him out in the morning had a sufficiently sedative effect; but he did not claim its performance, as, like most Irishmen, and other wild animals, he was chiefly active at night, and preferred sleeping over the daylight. It would be wearisome to continue the details of the various jerks this rope round my neck has given me from time to time, or how even the lapse of years has made but little difference in the relations we bear to each other. But a short time ago I was sitting at a dinner-party, when I was given the following note:

'Mister Thomson — Sur, cum whenever you raseeve this and bale me out, i am in truble. Your obt. Tim.

Polis Offica.'

This note had a cheering effect upon me, and my usually brilliant conversation was rendered even more so by its perusal. But what was our delight to read in the morning paper's police report—'An Irishman, Timothy ——, with one leg, charged with beating a policeman on the head with a crutch, for telling him to move on—*sentence*, to be banished the town.'

Cleopatra and I embraced, and have been on the most affectionate terms ever since.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

The interest excited among geologists and palæontologists, as mentioned in our last *Month*, in the discovery of ancient stone weapons and bones of extinct animals, is still maintained; and we are glad of it, because, if kept alive until the forthcoming meeting of the British Association at Aberdeen, it will there be further discussed by the assembled savans, and we may perhaps have to record some satisfactory conclusion. Antiquaries, too, are interested in the question, and not less so in certain curious discoveries which have been made of late. Twenty years ago, an engraved stone was found in a tumulus near Wheeling, Ohio, and proved for some time a complete puzzle to archæologists; but the characters are now known to be those in use among the Berbers, and M. Jomard says their purport is in the ancient Libyan idiom, which, according to Herodotus, was spoken all over Northern Africa.—M. Mariette has discovered, during his researches at Thebes, a royal burial-place intact, the tomb of Pharaoh Amosis; the coffin is covered with gold-leaf, and adorned with two great wings. Inside it were found thirty valuable jewels, and a golden axe, with raised devices on a ground of lapis lazuli. These rarities are soon to appear in the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities at Paris.

The astronomer-royal, in his last annual report to the Board of Visitors, describes the Greenwich Observatory as made more efficient than ever by the setting up of a large equatorial telescope, which, while not interfering with what has long been considered the standard work of the establishment, will render the system of observations more complete. The time-ball is still dropped at Deal by a direct current from the Observatory; and a recommendation is made in favour of establishing a time-ball at Portsmouth and Devonport. Mr Airy says further: 'It was first suggested, I believe, by the Board of Trade, that a signal should be exhibited every hour at one of the principal headlands of our southern coast, for the benefit of ships passing down the Channel; and, in the first instance, the Lizard Point was named. It appeared to me that the Start Point would be preferable; and with this modification, after having examined the locality, I submitted a detailed plan to the Admiralty. Considerations unconnected with the abstract value of the scheme induced the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to defer it for the present; but the matter will be kept in view for further consideration.' England would be fortunate, indeed, if all the departments of her civil service were as well ordered as the Greenwich Observatory.

Father Secchi, of the Observatory at Rome, has constructed a self-registering apparatus, by which the barometer, anemometer, thermometer, and ombromometer all write their own records on the same sheet of paper, by which a real advantage is gained in the comparison of observations, and in judging of the approach of storms, and their accompanying phenomena. It already appears that a change in the height is attended by a proportional transport of the atmosphere; by the passage, in fact, of an atmospheric wave.—We may mention, in connection with this meteorological subject, that Dr Tyndall, who is perhaps the most adventurous of living savans, is making preparations for a balloon ascent for observations at heights greater than any yet reached, if possible. Staffordshire, near Wolverhampton, is to be the point of departure, as being in the centre of the island, and thus affording time for the desired observations to be made before the balloon shall approach the sea.

While we yet have the long days, we hasten to notice Mr C. F. Patterson's 'New Mode of Self-registering the Quantity of Actual Sunlight per Day, as an Addition to Climatological Data.' Mr Patterson thinks this a subject which has been too much neglected by observers, and shews that it is probably as important as observation of the wind, or any other meteorological phenomenon. 'To the medical man,' he says, 'it would be highly useful to have a kind of Sunshine Directory, so as to be able to refer an invalid to such and such a district, as being most likely there to have his spirits cheered by the enlivening influence of the sun. It might help us, too, in forming conclusions as to the comparative healthiness of town and country life; and I should not feel at all surprised if the Registrar-general would point out to us some connection between the sunlight of any year, and the development and growth of ordinary and epidemic diseases.' We know that some plants which emit a powerful odour in sunshine, are scentless in the shade, and the reverse; that their products are different according to the circumstances under which they grow; and, so far as observations have been carried, we have evidence that the molecules of matter, the organic and inorganic substance of the globe, are sensibly influenced and modified by the direct action of the rays of the sun.

Two years ago, Mr Campbell brought before the Meteorological Society a glass-globe placed in a hemisphere, as an instrument for recording sunlight. The beam falling on the globe was reflected as from a burning-glass into the hemisphere, where it burned itself into a black ribbon; but there was a difficulty in preserving this record when burned, and the instrument was regarded more as a curiosity than as a thing of practical use. Mr Patterson avails himself of sensitive paper placed in a box, so as to receive all the sunlight that occurs throughout the day, be it long or short, through a slit. The slips of paper will be blackened by the light wherever it falls, and thus the sunshine will be recorded in all its fluctuations, while the cloudy intervals will be shewn by the unaltered parts, and we may hope that certain questions interesting to meteorologists will thereby be answered.

Under the seemingly dry title, *Explanations and Sailing Directions to accompany the Wind and Current Charts*, Lieutenant Maury's valuable and interesting work has reached its eighth edition. The second volume, recently forwarded from Washington for distribution in this country, contains nearly nine hundred pages, which, though intended for the practical guidance of navigators, abounds in matter interesting to the general reader. We may expect, as one of the consequences of this publication, that navigation will be divested of some of its delays and dangers. For instance, a sailor, looking at the fog-charts, observes that in one hundred crossings between New York and Liverpool, he may expect to encounter a fog twenty-eight times; that fogs are most frequent in the months of most daylight, and fewest in the darkest months; that certain latitudes are more subject to fogs than others, and hence he can shape his course accordingly. He finds a similar explanation with respect to gales of wind, the seasons when the gales will be favourable, and the reverse; the latitudes where the changes may be looked for, and the course to be taken to make the quickest passages during each month of the year. The scope of the work may be inferred from the fact, that it prescribes the courses from New York to California, India, Australia, to England and the North of Europe as far as the White Sea, to Africa and the Mediterranean. Mariners know, to their loss and vexation, that crossing the line involves delay. Lieutenant Maury shews how the delay may be avoided, and indicates the best place of crossing the equatorial region for each month of the year.

Considering the increase of commerce between this country and the United States, and the multiplication of screw-steamers, which make less noise than paddles, we cannot forbear to notice Lieutenant Maury's recommendation for the establishment of what he calls 'steam-lanes' across the Atlantic. Let this recommendation be faithfully followed, and we shall hear but little of collision and loss of life on the sea. Broad as the ocean is, the route taken by steam-ships between this country and the States comprehends a belt of but three hundred miles wide. In 1857, there were always fourteen steamers, seven each way, plying within that belt, exclusive of man-of-war steamers; the number is doubtless greater now, whereby the chances of collision are multiplied; and seeing that the number of passengers conveyed in 1857 was 54,700, any practicable measure for diminution of the risk would be worthy of attention. Lieutenant Maury proposes a practicable measure; namely, to set off a lane twenty or twenty-five miles wide on the northern edge of the belt for steam-ships going west, and a similar lane on the southern edge for those going east, leaving all the middle space, 150 miles in width, for sailing-ships. Were this proposal followed, it is clear that steamers could never meet, though they might overtake each other; and this latter contingency would be an advantage, because, in case of accident, a disabled vessel would be sure of assistance within a few hours. When once such lanes are properly laid down on the charts, a sailing-ship, if compelled to cross them, would do so as quickly as possible, and would know on what side to look for danger. The fate of the *Arctic*, *Pacific*, and *Tempest* is not yet forgotten; had the steam-lanes been followed three years ago, it is probable that those terrible wrecks would not have been attended by so great a loss of life. We recommend Lieutenant Maury's work to all who go down to the sea in ships: it is used in the Dutch navy, where all the officers speak English; it has been largely distributed by the marine department of our Board of Trade; and has been translated into French, and published at Paris for the use of the French marine, and we may say, for the marine of the whole continent.

The utilisation of carbonic acid as a motive-power is again the subject of experiment, and perhaps, with the extraordinarily tough iron now available through Bessemer's process, it will be possible to construct machinery of the requisite strength.

Another endeavour is initiated for the removal of the reproach that women who have the greatest share in the nursing and training of children are the least informed as to the rules of health, by the formation of a Ladies' National Association for the Diffusion of Sanitary Knowledge, with the Earl of Shaftesbury as President. Seminaries are to be established where school-mistresses, pupil-teachers, and nursery-governesses may learn what is needful of this essential subject; while knowledge will be imparted to others by means of libraries and lectures.—A school for cooks has been for some time in operation in Marylebone, to which mistresses, by payment of a subscription, may send their cooks and have them instructed in the culinary art. This is an undertaking which promises well for economy as well as for health.—Meanwhile, Mr Glassford reiterates the question to which we have before called attention—Shall London sewage be wasted or economised?—and shews that the sewage now poured into the Thames, and which will still be poured into the Thames by the new main drainage-works, would produce an annual revenue of L.600,000.

A thin blue-book has recently been published on a question to which we have occasionally drawn attention—the canal across the Isthmus of Suez. The book contains a *Dissertation on the True Position of Pelusium*, by Captain Spratt, who shews that the views of the French engineers as to the coast having remained unaltered since the time that Strabo described it, are altogether erroneous. The set of the currents along that part of the Mediterranean is well known: these currents carry the solid matters brought down by the Nile, and deposit them to the eastward at the rate of about twelve feet yearly; from which it results that places which were washed by the sea in Strabo's time are now eight miles inland. Captain Spratt thus confirms the opinions of leading English engineers as to the impossibility of establishing a permanent harbour for ships at the mouth of the canal in the Bay of Pelusium.

SONNET.

More free than Alpine eagle's wing is mind !
Lo! the four-faced, coquettish year all through,
My body in soot-bearded town's confined—
But not mind too, thank Heaven, not mind too;
No ! that oft flies the world around—The true,
The laughing conqueror o'er tide and wind,
Where foot ne'er walks, marks God's sweet love-name
signed;
Riots joy-mad 'neath skies of deepest blue;
Revels luxuriant 'midst groves of spice
In far-off isles, across the sobbing sea;
Enraptured scans majestic domes of ice
Towering o'er Greenland's vast sterility;
Pants 'neath a burthen of supreme delight
In many a classic vale, on many a Fame-crowned height.

J. Ellis.

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MEMORIES OF MELBOURNE.

NOTHING inanimate has a more animate expression than a ship or boat. Did you ever notice how a barge, moored under a bridge upon a scorching July day, seems to *enjoy* the shade? Even hotter than this present almost unprecedented July is the Australian February; and on a February day in '53, I stand upon Liardet's Jetty, watching the deserted craft in Hobson's Bay, blistering and broiling in the sun. Can you not fancy them a flock of melancholy marine Marianas, hopelessly mourning for their Jacks who never more return? The sun-browned ports have the lack-lustre look of eyes grown dim with watching. 'He cometh not,' moans every creaking cable. How sullenly that nearest barque swings with the turning tide! 'What's the good,' she seems to say, 'of pointing my nose seawards? Never again shall I sweep, albatross-like, over ocean billows. Never shall I refold my weary wings and glide, proud and happy as a swan, between banks bright with English grass.'

But, see, far out there, there *is* sign of life on board. A flag flutters to the peak—a signal for the water-police boat. A crew have been entrapped, when drunk, to take the ship home, and now repent them of their bargain. Swift as a mackerel, the summoned galley shoots across the bay. In a few minutes she is alongside. The second-mate flings the man in the bow a line, and the constables clamber up the side like cats. After a brief scuffle on the forecastle, the ringleaders of the riot are in irons; the rest of the quelled rebels sullenly scowl on the constables, who, squatted on inverted buckets, coolly smoke their pipes. Their inspector, in company with the chief officer—both puffing their cheroots—parades the poop. The police are waiting to aid in taking out the ship. Once fairly at sea, Jack, after a little vigorous but unvenomous bad language, will yield to Destiny, and calmly do his duty.

I have just lowered the glass through which I have been watching this little affair, when I hear an outcry upon the pier. The skipper of the outward-bounder has been on shore to complete his complement. He is a big, brown, Bristol man, with muddled bloodshot eyes, blue coat, streaked at the seams as though with whitewash, and tarnished gold-lace band. With him are the two boys who pulled him ashore, and whom he has been obliged to take with him in his man-hunt, lest *they* should decamp. Behind are two sailors, caught, overnight, like their mates on board, and, like them, now repentant. A wiry colonial crimp, with a bludgeon peeping from one of the many pockets of his Tweed shooting-jacket, clutches their collars in his muscular grasp, and, with strenuous knee-applied *à-posteriori* arguments, endeavours to urge them forward. The hackney-coachman, who has brought the party from town, having first pocketed his exorbitant fare, follows railing, and striving to get up a rescue for the tars—old and liberal customers of his. Suddenly they plump themselves down upon the planks, and swear they will not budge another inch. The skipper lugs; the crimp propels; the apprentices, partly through fellow-feeling, partly through fear of future fo'c's'le retribution, preserve a strict neutrality. A warder, from the Pentridge Stockade, who has been waiting for a boat to take him off to the Hulks, volunteers his services on the side of law. As soon as his blue and red uniform mingles in the chaos of writhing bodies and twining arms and legs, a party of serge-shirted, swarthy 'old Derwenters,' who hate the government livery as the fiend hates holy-water, rush fiercely into the fray. The jarvie, meanwhile, belabours skipper, crimp, and constable with a heavy hand and the heartiest of wills. If the sailors were not handcuffed, they might get off; but, at last, they are bundled, neck and crop, like sheep, into the ship's boat; the master and the boys jump after them, and away she goes through the green water. Jehu beats a hasty retreat to his box; the ex-convicts, too, think it advisable to make themselves scarce, and run to their whale-boat. She pushes off so hastily, however, that one of their number is left behind. The crimp and warder, with backs still smarting from his blows, rush at him to secure him; but, like a great Newfoundland dog, he flounders into the sea, regains his companions after a few lusty strokes, is dragged on board, a heap of dripping flannel, and departs pulling bow-oar, and taking a sight at his discomfited pursuers. A tug soon splashes over the bar of the Yarra Yarra, and takes the Bristol ship in tow, and so that little phase of colonial life is finished.

A boy upon the pier, thin as a threadpaper, is selling pastry—a scanty trayful of stale, melancholy tarts. His face has just the same worn-out, hopeless look. I buy a puff, sapid and tough as leather, that I may learn his history. He is ready enough to tell me his sorrows, poor lad, catching at a tone of kindness with an eagerness that makes my heart ache. He is a surgeon's son, came out to Melbourne two months ago with a few pounds in his pocket, and a perfect stock of letters of introduction, and now in rags, is hawking stale tarts about the streets. He must sell half his stock before he can get a dinner. He sleeps 'anywhere,' he says. Well may he add, 'O! what would mother say if she could see me?' He is but a type of a class. Hundreds of such puny creatures, as fit for the rough struggle of colonial life as a minnow to stem the torrent of Niagara, found their way to Melbourne, and a pauper's grave, during the continuance of the gold rush. This youngster hails from Clifton; and anything more pathetic than the gaze with which he follows the Bristol ship fading in the distance, I have never seen. Many a time has he watched such a vessel gliding past St Vincent's Rocks. She soon will be floating on the familiar Avon, but he may never see it more. It was a cruel, cruel thing to listen to the poor foolish fellow's fancies, and let him leave his home in a madcap hunt for fortune!

Here comes a ship with more such victims. Her fresh-painted sides, scraped spars, and tarred rigging, gleam glossy in the sunlight. The red ensign flaps in dazzling folds about the peak; her house-flag floats proudly from the main. Her passengers, too, are in holiday attire. Clustered upon the forecastle, they curiously eye the shore. Sail after sail ceases to speck the sky with snow. The lowering jib bulges out into a broad balloon, as the cable rattles through the hawse-hole like a myriad of shot bricks, and the plunging anchor scares the ocean-nymphs or oysters.

Officials pull alongside, and as soon as their inspection is over, lighters and a steam-boat follow. Into the latter, on whose paddle-box stands her captain, flamingo-like in form and flamingo-hued in face, pour those of the passengers who are most impatient to touch land. The former are patronised by those who wish to make but one job of debarkation, and take their luggage with them now. For its eight miles' river-carriage they will only have to pay a little more than it would have cost if sent as cargo from London to the Bay. The steamer having embarked its share—including all the 'shilling-a month-men' amongst the crew, with their chests and bundles, and, no doubt, a deserter or two, who have sneaked over the side with close-shorn cheeks and landsman's apparel to trick the watching mate—puts off, and, after a few calls at other ships, points its head to the river. Lighter after lighter, loudly cheered by those left on board, and echoing back their cheers, staggers away beneath its high-piled load. I remember how, but a fortnight ago, *I* thus landed, full of hope, and feel contemptuous pity for the dupes who are sailing, singing, to their doom. I can picture to myself their trip. The shore may look uninviting, with its baked soil and stunted trees; but what is that but the rough rind of the rich pomegranate? The Yarra Yarra's muddy yellow is Pactolian in their eyes. But let them see false visions whilst they may. Why dash their hopes, colonial Cynic, in that passing cutter, with thy cruel, 'Sing away, boys—you'll want all your spirits before the week's out!' The chant does thee no harm—it only wakes the pelicans dozing like gorged aldermen upon the banks. So the poor dreamers glide gaily along the coffee-coloured stream—the fetid fumes of tallow from the 'boiling down' establishments that fringe its sides impinge upon their nostrils, if not as fragrance, still as most venial malodours, they thread the maze of shipping that chokes the approaches to the wharf—cordage crossing like cat's cradles, figure-heads impertinently peering into neighbouring cabins, bowsprits athwart of booms like fencer's foils—with hearts that thump like steam-engines at their proximity to the city wherein, Whittington-like, they expect to pick up gold—and then are bundled with their boxes on the landing-place, to find themselves *alone*, and to look out for a home.

A Pelion-upon-Ossa of luggage is piled upon the wharf; more lies mouldering in a bog hard by. A Pickford's van, if it could get the price for carriage that the draymen ask, might make a handsome little fortune by a single trip. Even those who can afford to pay their preposterous demands, these supercilious gentlemen, seated half-snoozing on their shafts, treat with the scantest courtesy. *Well, they don't care, but perhaps they will take a job.* Their employers, however, have to extract their own trunks from the mountain of chattels of which they form a part—with a savage jerk like a village dentist's—and heap them on the dray. We, meanwhile, first stepping into the inn upon the left for a glass of porter (price 8d.), will turn Melbourne-wards along the Sandridge Road.

Since the time of which I speak, so rapid has been the growth of the magnificent Melbourne mushroom, that handsome houses have sprung up on each side, and the road is a bustling thoroughfare. But at *my* now, it isn't safe to traverse the heavy, sandy track after dusk; except the hotel, no tenements but tents abut upon it. We read with wonder in Macaulay that, not many decades of years ago, sportsmen blazed away over what now is Regent Street: cities, like everything else, leap into maturity beneath a southern sun; my Sandridge Road is as archæological as the historian's Regent Street after the lapse of six years only.

Melancholy-looking marquees of every imaginable form line the roadside, and play at hide-and-seek, as it were, amongst the gum-trees. Outside one hangs a brass-plate inscribed 'Establishment for Young Ladies.' Where in that gipsy-dwelling can the piano be stowed? Who are the 'first-rate masters' that stoop their heads beneath the looped-up portal? Can any of the scared, squalid folks around find money to pay school-bills, or any of their draggle-tailed girls leisure from their maid-of-all-work to go to school? Poor Miss Pinkerton, I fear, sighs for the old house in Chiswick Mall, whose sun-blistered door now shews an oblong of green paint, fresh almost as when first laid on, pierced with four gaping screw-holes. Little did the man who engraved that sober, stay-at-home plate, imagine that its brass would ever flash back the brilliance of Australian sunlight.

Let us turn aside to the right for a minute or two, and wander by the lagoon. The scanty grass, sparsely sprinkled with a piebald scentless violet and a few star-shaped flowers, lilac and yellow, crackles beneath the tread, and the quaint foliage of the dingy, dreary trees seems, as it blazes in the sun, cut out of tin. The air grows cooler as we approach the pond, around which scores of bull-frogs croak in deafening chorus, and beneath the waters of which the yellow lily ducks its gleaming head, as though it feared a sun-stroke. The trees seem to crowd around the lakelet for the sake of its *amabile frigus*, some with bark hanging in ragged patches from their trunks—very disreputable-looking trees—trees out at elbows, as it were; here and there, one without a vestige of bark upon its stem, white, graceful, smooth, and stripped, seemingly, in readiness to bathe. You think of Musidora when you mark its toe-like roots just dipped into the water. The hot light coming down so silently, gives everything a lonely, dream-like look. The oppressive hush that reigns around is only broken by the lulling buzz of flies innumerable, or the startling cry of birds. Australian birds can shriek, scold, whistle, croak, laugh, and chatter; but, save a few that are always trying over and over again the first bar of a tune they have got hold of—waxing pettish at their impotence to get any further, and then relapsing into sulky silence—they have no more notion of *singing* than a Quaker. The gorgeous plumage of parrots, paroquets, and lories, glints back the sunshine with a metallic lustre; cockatoos flit ghost-like from bough to bough; long black snakes, with white waistcoats, striped with pink, wriggle out of your path, favouring you, as they go, with a glance of 'dull and treacherous hate' from their cruel eyes. An attenuated iguana, like a crocodile's wraith, regards you from yon charred, jagged, decayed tooth-like stump with the strange old-world expression of its race. You feel that it must have lived centuries, and holds within its wrinkled bosom secrets common only to its tribe, and those of long-departed black-fellows. A branded brood-mare and her colt fling up their heels as you draw near, and with an offended whinny, scamper further into the scrub; a few stray cattle stop grazing as you go by, and slowly raising their heads, inspect you anxiously at first; but the anxiety soon passes into contempt. They are colonial cattle, and therefore despise an Englishman. The brindled heifer mutters to the dun cow: 'I wonder what that new fellow's doing here—I don't much think he knows himself;' and then down go the heads again—*chump—cranch—chump.*

There is a sudden whirr above the yellow reeds that fringe the water with their plumps of pennoned spears. Bronze wings and purple polls emboss the sapphire sky with darker brilliance. *Bang-bang, bang-bang*—four barrels have brought down as many wild-ducks; and that queer mongrel—more like a bundle of tarred oakum than a retriever—leaps into the lagoon, and brings the splashing birds to land. His joint-owners are two fellow-passengers of mine: one—the shabbier—late our greatest swell; the other, our greatest scamp; by profession, I believe, a sweep. Both being tolerable shots, and too lazy to set earnestly to work, they have fraternised into a sporting firm, and supply the hotel-keepers with the dainty Sambo has just brought ashore. The sweep, I see, bullies the swell considerably; and, remembering the airs the puppy gave himself on board, I am not sorry to see it. A famous place to take the conceit out of a young fellow is Melbourne just now. Every man is valued precisely at his working-worth. Potts thinks himself quite equal, and in most cases far superior, to Plantagenet.

How is it that there are no *chiffonniers* in Melbourne? They might pick up not dirty beggarly rags alone, but suits complete, from hat to boots, scarce soiled. The amount of cast-away clothing, hardly the worse for wear, that we see as we walk from the lagoon to Emerald Hill, puzzles you, does it not, my friend? I am not a sufficient adept in 'old-clothes philosophy,' to explain the mystery. We want Herr Teufelsdröckh for a hierophant. I don't wonder at *stockings* being thrown away, since it costs more to wash them than to buy them. Yonder poor lady at the tent-door there is trying to diminish her household expenses by doing herself the family's washing. With sandalled shoon, and black barège dress hooked up about her hips, she makes a laundress, at whom one knows not whether to laugh or cry. That slim, elegant girl, her daughter, has no time now for crochet; with a willow-pattern plate, she trots off to the neighbouring butcher's for the meat. One son is chopping down a blasted tree for firewood; another digs a trench about the tent, to carry off the rain that is pretty sure to descend at nightfall. Paterfamilias, an oleaginous cockney, sprawls on the chests inside, reading the advertisements in the *Argus*—he 'll never make a colonist. An old convict, who occupies the nearest tent, and who has shewn much rough kindness to the new arrivals, saunters up, and indulges in a little harmless badinage with his pale *protégée* at the wash-tub.

Cones and polygons of canvas stretch in a straggling encampment along the hillside, owned by those who have not as yet been able to obtain lodgings in the town. When thousands of emigrants are pouring into the harbour weekly, it is hard work to get a brick-and-mortar domicile. There is the patch where my little party raised its pole. We engaged a room in an unfinished house the day we landed, and have just got into it. There are only three rooms and a strip of yard in the premises, but the rent is four hundred a year. We pay the greater part of this for our own scant accommodation, and think ourselves well off. Tent-life is nice enough for a day or two; you fancy yourself at a perpetual picnic: but when, time after time, you return dispirited from the town, having found that you might as well have used your glowing recommendatory letters as shaving-paper; when the wind blows out your fire, before which you kneel in hungry expectation of a chop; when the rain floats your boxes, and soaks your mattress; above all, if you have to lie ill and untended for the live-long day, tent-life soon loses its charms. Our doctor, I find, has still to hang out here; it serves the rascal right. When I was writhing with English cholera, he would not step across to see me, because I could not pay in advance the monstrous fee he asked. Well may the thirst for gold be called accursed, when it converts the normally generous sons of Galen into skin-flints.

But though Emerald Hill is a comfortless place, Canvas Town, on the opposite side of the valley, is far worse. I have been through it once, and have no wish to venture there again. Typhus is raging in that suburb of sodden sail-cloth. You would have to wade through filth knee-deep, sending up its pestilential fumes beneath the sweltering sun. You would stand a very good chance of being robbed in broad daylight by some of the numerous roughs that hector about the stinking alleys. You would come back with a soul sickened by the rampant selfishness and hopeless misery that you had seen. Decency is dead in Canvas Town. Only yesterday they put a corpse into a pork-barrel there, buried it in the middle of a tent, and sang its dirge with drunken howlings. If you want to convince yourself of the truthfulness of Thucydides, Boccaccio, and Defoe, in their descriptions of the brutalising influences of the plague, you may descend that slope, and make your observations; but I would rather be excused.

We will not go either into the Botanic Gardens, on our way into the town; they have still, in their incipient condition, a drearily chaotic look, and as a place of 'retired leisure,' seem somehow to intensify the feeling of worry with which the mad bustle of Melbourne inspires one. I said just now that emigrants expected to find Melbourne paved with gold. After all, the hope is not so absurd, since this handsome blue arch on which we stand—the Prince's Bridge—is built of auriferous quartz—a 'golden bridge' in plain fact, instead of the elegant metaphor of Russian diplomacy. Over it come trooping a horde of Chinamen. Baggy and blue are their breeches, shirt-like their blue frocks. Their hats are bee-hives; their shoes are small canoes. Each bears a bamboo upon his shoulder, from the ends depend his bundles, like pails from a milkman's yoke. Some have got rid of their tails. Those who have not, are reminded of their eel-like possessions by the pulls that they ever and anon receive from the saucy colonial youth, who, jeering, follow the flat-faced, almond-eyed train, as it trots past me. I understand Elia's 'Imperfect Sympathies,' and feel to the full De Quincey's horror of China. There is plenty of some kind of brain behind those sallow brows. I do not look upon their owners as an inferior race, but I cannot in any way place myself in moral *rapport* with them. They are not beneath me, but alongside, with an impassable gulf between us. Their very glances and gestures require an interpreter as much as their language.

If you are an ethnologist, you will find abundant materials for your favourite study as we pursue our walk. Jabbering Frenchmen; Germans with the heavy, beer-bemuzzed countenance that characterises the Teutonic race; sweetly smiling Italians; Spaniards proud and greasy; burly Danes; lithe Eurasians; savage-eyed Malays; tattoed, broad-breasted Maories; drunken blackfellows with their gins swathed in scant drapery of blanket; American niggers marvelling to find themselves as good as anybody else able to pay his way, and ludicrously bumptious as a consequence; lean, yellow Yankees, with their national look of dyspeptic billiard-markers; above all, hosts of the hook-nosed pets of Mr Disraeli; blend with the crowds of gaping English, shrewd-visaged Scotch, grinning Irish emigrants, and the tanned, rough-spoken, genuine colonials, who throng the long, wide streets. A comical kind of mongrel Jew, too, you see occasionally—the British Israelite. His collarless coat, broad brim, and bristling beard, give him the look of a fast Quaker. Police cadets, stroking their incipient moustaches, and savagely clinking their spurs and sabres; escort-men in braided coats, armed to the teeth, dashing into town with their precious charge; travellers bound bushwards with pistols at their saddle-bows—sending one's thoughts back to Dick Turpin's days; diggers, 'down on the spree,' driving about in hackney-coaches, with ostrich-feathers in their wide-awakes, and drinking champagne from buckets; files of anxious-eyed expectants besieging the addresses of the advertised vacancies in the morning's *Argus;* express-vans starting from, and literary adventurers with desperation in their disappointed eyes departing from, its office; a mob at the post-office fiercely fighting their way up to its pigeon-holes for their letters; weather-board hovels beside princely palaces; things ticketed as 'very dear,' to tempt the purse-proud lucky portion of the populace to buy; ever-lasting auctions; 'gold bought in any quantity' displayed in staring placards in every second window in the leading thoroughfares; bullock-teams scratching brougham panels with their branching horns; and, now that it has begun to rain, drays acting as ferry-boats across the gutters swollen into rivers—are a few of the sights most likelyto attract a stranger's notice.

If you step into one of those low 'free-and-easies'—of course, for the laudable purpose of 'enlarging your experience'—I would advise you to be moderate in your libations; not to seem too flush of money; to refuse the polite invitation of the tall, pale, bearded gentleman on your right to take a hand at whist; and to find your way back to your lodgings without the guidance of that low-browed fellow in the blue shirt, who, having encored Madame Carandini's singing all the evening with sham-tipsy howls, will offer you his escort when the house closes, in a sudden excess of friendliness towards a stranger who 'don't know his whereabouts.' Melbourne swarms at present with London blacklegs and 'gentlemen from over the way'—the colonial slang for Van Diemonians. Your friend in the blue shirt will knock you on the head in the first lonely corner into which he leads you.

Besides concert-rooms, wherein drunken diggers hand pewter pots of claret to the *prima donna,* and pelt the *pianiste's* bald head with orange-peel, Melbourne has not much evening entertainment to offer you. True, there are some excellent lectures even now at the Mechanics' Institute; but these, in your new-arrival eagerness to 'see life,' no doubt, you will think slow. Like the boy with the bread and cheese, you can get *them* at home. Come back to Melbourne in a little time, and you will find a magnificent theatre, unrivalled out of London, and lyric and dramatic artistes making fortunes in a season. The only Thespian fane, I think, as yet erected, is an American circus, pitched in a dusty wilderness somewhere in the suburbs—a great blind colosseum of wood and canvas.

Where shall you go on Sunday? Why, there 's the Catholic cathedral, with its mortar-splashed brick and empty niches—as though even the church grew wicked in this sinful city, and ran short of saints—or the Scotch church, or the Methodist, or the Independent, or the 'Beardie,' or the—but the catalogue is too long to chronicle. Even if you be a Mormonite, you can find a tabernacle to suit you, and, I much fear, wherever you go, a good many empty pews to pick from. For my own part, after my long, dreary, weary Sunday of loneliness in crowds, I like to slip into old-fashioned St James's Church, when the sunbeams are westering and the sky begins to cool, and link myself, in a shadowy way, with home once more, by joining in the old-fashioned responses of the *Book of Common Prayer.* Whilst our evening-hymn sinks, dew-like, through the dusk in dying cadences, bells in far-away old England are ringing in worshippers to morning-service; but, seated in my quiet corner, I forget the difference of time, and picture to myself my parish church aglow with evening sunlight, or fading in gray, tranquillising gloom. The blushing beams again bathe the time-worn tablets in a ruddy brilliance; gloaming comes creeping up the aisles, and dims the familiar faces in the nearest pews; the happy hush of an English Sabbath evening breathes around me; when suddenly the congregation scatters, and I remember that thousands of miles of foaming sea and city, sprinkled plain and height, lie between me and the dear, dear old home!

THE BRITISH POMPEII.

The Wrekin, the pride of every Salopian, stands isolated in the midst of a vast plain, and still forms a remarkable landmark, which in more remote ages was so important as to acquire for it its Celtic name of Wrekin, which signifies the principal or the conspicuous hill. It was undoubtedly one of the first rallying-points of the British tribes, when driven westward by Ostorius Scapula, as it is strongly fortified by a double *agger* of stones, surrounding the summit of the hill, a circumstance which distinguishes it from the Roman encampments, which were constructed of earth. It is within three miles of the west of the Wrekin, and protected by it, that the now buried city of Wroxeter was first erected in the rude and unrecorded ages before the Roman conquest. The Latin name, Uriconium, by which it is designated in the second Itinerary of Antoninus, is appropriately interpreted into the 'city at the entrance of the river,' as it is situated near the confluence of the Tern and Severn. It was one of the chief cities of the Cornavii, a Phœnician word meaning 'the dwellers in the sacred country,' an etymology well borne out by the numbers of Druidical remains of sepulchres and temples found throughout the conjectured limits of that tribe. It was very near the borders of Siluria, a district not more famous in modern geologic science, than for the brave and prolonged resistance of Caractacus to the inroads of the Roman invaders. About two miles to the east of the city, like a gigantic sentinel, stood the Wrekin; while ten miles south-west of it rose the Caer-Caradoc, another hill-fortress of great strength, which was unquestionably one of the chief positions of Caractacus, if not the scene of his last refuge and betrayal by the infamous Queen Cartimandua. None of the hills of Britain have witnessed more daring feats of barbaric courage and despair; and never has a British city sent forth a warrior more brave, more patriotic, and more magnanimous than our Silurian chieftain.

That Uriconium was the scene of many sanguinary conflicts, that it was successively occupied by the

Britons and the Romans, and that it was eventually destroyed by massacre and fire, are facts indisputable; but the period of its destruction, and the nation of its latest masters, are still unknown. It was known to the Saxons by the name of Wrekin-Ceaster, or the Wrekin Camp, which was subsequently corrupted into Roxalter, and Wroxeter, its present name. It was mentioned at the close of the seventh century in the Chorography of Ravennas, from which circumstance Baxter concluded that it flourished till the time of the Danes; the more so, as an ancient tradition existed in his day that the city was burned by them. No records of its own later times have been yet discovered in the excavations.

Uriconium was so extensive as to cover from three to four hundred acres, and vestiges of its circumference may still be traced for three miles. At the Roman period, it was encircled by an earthwork fifteen feet in height, and a fosse fifteen feet wide. Five roads were constructed from it to meet the other Roman roads, and the foundations of a Roman bridge may still be seen when the waters of the Severn are low. From time to time, since the beginning of the eighteenth century, portions of this subterranean city have been uncovered, and exposed to the curious investigations of antiquaries. In 1701, a hypocaust for heating a vapour-bath was discovered by some labourers, who were digging to ascertain the cause of the barrenness of the land. About forty years later, a mould for coins was found, bearing upon it an impress of the head of Julia, the wife of Severus. In 1752 three sepulchral tablets were exhumed, and in 1788 very considerable remains of Roman baths and hypocausts were found and carefully surveyed by a member of the Antiquarian Society. Many other relics have been discovered at various times, such as amulets, urns, small tesselated pavements, and coins, the latter bearing the local name of Wroxeter Dinders, from the word Denarii.

Having thus collected, as far as I am able, the histories of the past, it remains for me to record the discoveries and associations of the present.

A few weeks before my first visit to Wroxeter, I ascended the hill-fortress of Caer-Caradoc, and examined with deep interest the inner and outer fosse of the intrenchment: then, as I stood upon the summit of the upper *vallum*, and looked across the great Shropshire and Cheshire plain to the north, and the valley of Uriconium that lay between me and the Wrekin; the pleasant fields, creeping up the lower slopes of the mountains; the map-like outlines, the patterned hedgerows, and the ornamental coppices of the plain below; the quiet villages with their church towers; and the silvery banner of steam from the engines speeding along the artificial levels—these passed away from my cognizance; and instead of them, I gazed upon the Holy Land of the Druids, with its sacred and mysterious groves of giant oaks, and its symbolic and jealously guarded temples upon the neighbouring heights; upon tangled thickets and dank jungles, haunted by the wild boar and the wolf, and intersected only by a few rude British roads, and by the course of the water-streams pouring on to swell the Severn; upon the Longmynd range, on the other side of the Stretton Valley, with its British trackway stretching across it, and tumuli commemorative of recently slain chieftains; and upon tall and unshapely hoar stones, standing out here and there as rude landmarks. Then the heights of Caer-Caradoc itself, the rocks whereon my feet stood, and under whose shadow peaceful sheep were feeding, were peopled by a crowd of frenzied priests and women, who had taken refuge here from the battle raging in the streets of their city, just visible in the distance; and who waited, with the fierce and uncontrolled emotions of a savage age, for the tidings of the struggle round their burning homes. So it was I first entertained the desire to visit the buried city, and interrogate its disentombed relics respecting the history of our barbaric countrymen. But, although upon the heights of the Caradoc, I could only picture the landscape upon which Caractacus gazed; I knew that the famed ruins I was about to visit were not his Celtic Uricon Caer, the 'City of Kings,' with its rude huts, and vallum of wood and stones, but the Latinised Uriconium, the home of Roman families, built when they had found peace and leisure to erect their massive houses, and curiously inlay their tesselated pavements, and paint their frescoed walls with diligent attention to convenience and luxury.

My first feeling upon entering the field of the excavations was one of disappointment and chagrin; instead of the busy and extensive scene of labour I had anticipated, I saw only a space of two acres—and how small does such a space look to one who has no practical idea of what an acre is!—fenced in with wooden hurdles from the surrounding turnip-field, and lazily dug by four men with the listless and uninterested air of ignorant labourers. Yet, after this first damp upon my enthusiasm, I began again to recognise the interest and importance of the undertaking. Here, as elsewhere, the curious and invincible Spirit of the Present was wrestling face to face with the reticent and immortal Angel of the Past for its mysterious secret: 'Tell us now thy name,' is our demand, and the disentombed chambers bear to us in reply the echoes of distant ages; but they are in a forgotten tongue, and faint and broken syllables alone reach us. Nature in her own majestic features remains the same; the everlasting hills, the ceaseless flow of the Sabrina, the inexhaustible outpouring of light and heat, the unchangeable changes of the seasons, are the same for us as for the departed nations whose homes and tombs are beneath the clods around us; but upon man's works, as upon man himself, rests the irreversible doom, 'Thou shalt surely die.'

But it was not to moralise nor to sentimentalise that I came among the ruins, but to peep and peer, and scrutinise, and *imagine* like an antiquary. I must traverse the courts, and descend the steps, and look down into the baths and hypocausts of Uriconium for myself, shaking off the sadness that oppresses me, which weighs me down the more, because everywhere are indubitable tokens of that most horrible of all possible horrors to a woman, the sudden assault and pillage and rapine of a populous city.

Through all the centuries that have lapsed from that time to this, there has stood upon the banks of the Severn an eloquently silent memorial of the desolation of Uriconium. The Old Wall of Wroxeter, as it is called, is a fragment of Roman masonry; it is about twenty feet high, and exactly three feet thick. On the southern surface, which is the interior one, there are traces of three arches, and of transverse walls forming the partitions of chambers. It is supposed to be situated in the most central and important part of the city, and it has consequently been chosen as the point for the first explorations. The northern side of this wall is evidently the exterior of a building which faced an open passage, fourteen feet wide, running its entire length, which has been traced westward nearly to the hedge now separating the field from the Watling Street road. On the other side of the passage was a vast oblong court, 226 feet long by 30 in breadth; to this court there was an entrance from the Watling Street, where the basements of two large columns, one of them with bevelled mouldings, were found, while several fragments of architectural ornaments were scattered about the building; the whole area being neatly paved with the herring-bone pavement. Corresponding with the passage separating this court from the old wall, was another on the opposite side, of varying width, in which was found a portion of a beautiful tesselated pavement. The outer wall of this second passage fronted a street paved with small round stones, and joining at a right angle with the Watling Street. This part of the excavations has been re-covered, and is therefore no longer open to the view of the curious. And in these large buildings, whose size seems to mark them as public, no human bones were found by the excavators.

The old wall is evidently the portal of a house, for though in the rooms built against it there was found a quantity of burnt corn, which makes it probable they were grain-stores, behind these lie rooms for domestic use; there is a small bath with a dressing-room adjoining, and underneath, a hypocaust of the kind called *vaporarium* or *sudatio*, with flues attached to the wall for conveying the heated air into the bath above. Near to these, running parallel with the foundations of the old wall, are a succession of underground passages and chambers: in one hypocaust were found three skeletons, one of a very old man, who was crouching or sitting in the corner, and who had borne with him in his flight a box of money containing a number of copper coins of little value; the other two are supposed to be women, who had sought their securest place of refuge in this subterranean furnace; the skull of a very young child was also found in the same range of buildings. Adjoining this hypocaust, thus tragically marked, are others of various sizes, the largest of which is beneath a room twenty-five feet broad, and thirty-seven long, including a semicircular end, which is not without precedent in the history of Roman remains; bow-windows having been found both at Pompeii and at Ridgewell in Essex. This hypocaust contained a hundred and twenty pillars of square Roman tiles, exactly three feet high, the usual height of hypocausts; a passage led from this to a smaller hypocaust, entering it by an archway of Roman tiles; a staircase of three steps, each of which is a single stone, led to the upper rooms. A room eight feet square, with a herring-bone pavement of small red tiles placed edge-wise, and a drain, well formed and paved with large roof-tiles, completes the list of the discoveries up to last April.

Since that time, the excavators have been exploring the ground parallel with Watling Street; they have uncovered a large open court with two entrances, the wider one apparently less in use than the other, to which there are two steps, the lower curiously hollowed at the corner, upon which persons coming up the street from the south would naturally tread; while the upper stone is more unaccountably worn into one single and perfect footprint, quite three inches deep, but no broader than the untrammelled foot of a sandalled Roman. Five small rooms on each side open into this court, which, if it be found to open into other apartments beyond, would correspond to the Tuscan *atrium*, or unroofed entrance-hall to a mansion, with the bedrooms of the male servants (*cubicula*) opening into it. The solid, bulky character of Roman masonry is well known; here, even the partition-walls were three feet thick. They have been found so far ornamented as to give us an idea of the utmost magnificence of decoration; the interior of one wall was inlaid with mosaic like the tesselated pavement, and the exterior of another was painted in fresco. Slate from the quarries in Wales, and lead from the mines of Derbyshire, used for roofing, and glass for the windows, have been found.

Such is Uriconium. Archæology, like geology, needs a suggestive imagination. If a literal, matter-of-fact person stood upon the excavated field, he would see little but the foundation of a few houses, two or three trenches, and here and there a pile of red tiles, like a playground which children had just left; but imagination rebuilds the fallen walls, raises for us the prostrate pillars, repeoples the deserted homes, and sets before us a Roman city with its cyclopean buildings, and its almost indestructible fortifications.

To see the inhabitants of Uriconium, it is necessary that we should go to the Museum at Shrewsbury, for there are gathered all the tokens of their existence, save the imperishable and immovable ruins of their houses; and even of these are gone the basements and capitals of the pillars, and the great head of Pan found in an excavation near the river. We went, therefore, to the out-of-the-way back-street of Shrewsbury where the Museum is situated; happily for us, we had not been there many minutes when the secretary of the Wroxeter committee, Dr Henry Johnson, came in with a few more relics to add to those before us. With the kindest politeness, he shewed to us all the curiosities, and permitted us to remove many of them from the cases for closer inspection. Among those which he had brought were a small cast of a female head, and the handle of a lamp, the first fragment of one found: and which he exhibited to us triumphantly. He pointed out to us particularly the skulls and skeletons with professional appreciation. The skulls, he said, were somewhat peculiar in their formation, and he was carefully measuring and noting them, as they were brought one after another from the city. It is almost saddening to recall the indifference with which we turned over the bones of human beings, as though time had stripped them of the sacredness of humanity. 'The skull of a young woman,' 'The wise tooth of a person probably about twenty-one years of age,' 'The bones of the old man found in the hypocaust, whom we call the major-domo,' 'The skeleton of an infant,' were pointed out to us, and we looked at them, and handled and compared them, just as we did the fossils in another part of the Museum. There were many objects possessing interest as articles of domestic and personal use and ornament; fragments of Samian pottery, of a bright-red colour, and beautifully traced with patterns in basso-relief; coarse black ware from Upchurch for ordinary uses; and a white porous pottery, of the same clay as that found at Broseley, used chiefly for jars and jugs of elegant shapes. Then there were the rings, which in every age are the badges of love and friendship; combs of bone curiously ornamented, and hair-pins of the same material; beads of glass and amber; buckles and fastenings for the dress, which more distinctly brought before us the living personality of the beings whose bones we had handled. Dr Johnson shewed to us a bronze stamp belonging to an oculist of Uriconium, the inscription on which proved that in those times, as in these, there were 'diseases of the eyes,' though, from the beautiful and regular teeth we had before seen, we had concluded there could have been no need of a dentist. Bones of various quadrupeds and birds, numerous tusks of the wild boar, and the antlers of an extinct species of deer, are found in great quantities, as well as many articles of ornament and use formed of bone. In a separate case were collected the articles made of iron; a key, never more to unlock its guarded treasures, and rusty styli, never again to pen words of affection or hatred, lay side by side, with nails, and clamps, and rivets, and a small iron trident, whose use is not positively known. There appears to be an extraordinary scarcity of weapons, if Uriconium was actually under military domination at the time of its destruction. The excavations are upon a small scale as yet; still it is strange that the only weapons are a few spear-heads of bronze, such as were in use among the ancient Britons. Perhaps the Roman arms will be found in future explorations. Even the tesselated pavements of the city are carried away, and now lie upon the

Museum floor in square wooden frames. All these things lose something of their proper interest by being divorced from their own place.

As in other Roman ruins, many coins are found, but chiefly copper ones. There was an edict prohibiting the melting down of money, which no doubt was strictly observed with respect to the inferior metals, that accounts for the quantity of copper coins found in Roman ruins. There are a large number of the Uriconium coins yet undeciphered, and they will probably remain so, as they are much worn and defaced, the damp soil having been unfavourable to their preservation: it is not improbable that among them may be the money of the Celtic British chiefs. There is a specimen of the earliest Roman coin circulated in Britain, that struck by Claudius in commemoration of his conquest of this country, and minted, it is thought, in 46 A.D. Then follow the entirely foreign coins of Domitian and Trajan, which bore no reference to Britain. Some copper coins of Antoninus Pius, referring to a rebellion subdued by him; and another bearing the name of Faustina, which may be the empress of Antoninus, though the coins of Fausta, the wife of Constantine, which were minted in London, are found in numbers elsewhere. Another with the title of Julia Augusta, ascribed to the date 217 A.D., was struck in honour of Julia Domna, the wife of Septimius Severus, who died in York 211 A.D. This coin is the more interesting, as a mould exactly fitting it was found in the excavations, and it must, therefore, have been minted at Uriconium. Is it impossible that it was struck in honour of a visit from the empress-mother? There is also a coin of Julia Mamæa, the wise and excellent mother of Alexander Severus. The coins of Claudius Gothicus, a Batavian usurper in the reign of Vespasian, of Alexander Severus, and of Gallienus, bear no notice of Britain; but there are coins of Postumus, who, in the reign of Gallienus, formed a distinct empire of Britain, Spain, and Gaul, and coins of his successors, Victorinus and Tetricus, of about the time 260 A.D. Of far greater interest than these is the British coin of the usurper Carausius, who reigned over Britain for seven years in the time of Maximian: it bears the impress of the king joining hands with a female who holds a trident; other coins of this prince indicate the first rise of naval power in this country under the symbol of a ship. The coin of Constantine the Great had little interest for us, but that of his unhappy son, Crispus, had the charm that melancholy things have, with its altar and legend, *Beata Tranquillitas* (Blessed Tranquillity), made pathetic by his own untimely death. The last Roman coins struck in Britain were those of Constantius. The coins of latest date circulated in Uriconium during the last days of Roman domination were those of Valens, Valentinian, Theodosius, and Victor, the son of the British usurper, Maximus, in the reign of Theodosius, 382 A.D. Among the coins lay the sorrow-laden memorial of the fall of Jerusalem, the medal *Judea Capta*, with its weeping Jewess under a palm-tree, which had carried to Uriconium its story of unequalled horrors, before the city was desolated by the same tragical fate. These are some of the coins and medals collected in the Museum; others as interesting, and more important, as elucidating the history of the city, may yet be found, and enable us to conclude with more certainty the era of its fall. There is believed to be a large cemetery outside the city walls, which will no doubt yield us much important and interesting information by its monumental inscriptions; on the tablets found there are the names of dwellers in these ruined homes, two sweet-sounding ones of women among them, Antonia and Placida. May we not learn as much of the domestic life and religious faith of these people by the monuments they erected to their dead, as we shall do of their public history by their minted coins?

It is of course impossible to fix the date of the final overthrow of Uriconium, but several thoughts suggest themselves regarding that day of carnage and destruction, some of whose victims have been at last found in their fatal hiding-places. It was after the pacific and civil occupation of the city by the Romans; after the Celtic tribes had been subdued by the Thracian legions; after a partial amalgamation of the nations; the tesselated pavements, and frescoed walls, and massive columns, with all the domestic ornaments and conveniences of Roman luxury, had rendered Uriconium a fitting residence for colonists from the Eternal City, before the day of reprisals for the destruction of Uricon Caer dawned upon their doomed mansions; yet it was before the establishment of Saxon customs, and before the circulation of those imperishable records of the past, the Saxon coins. The Saxons built their own Wrekin-Ceastre upon its site, but was Uriconium still existing when they reached the plain of Powis? There still remains a tradition, founded upon the poems of the Cumbrian prince Llywarc Hên, that about the year 570 A.D. the citizens of Uriconium, called by him Dduille Vrecon—the City of the Wrekin—fled before an army of Mercian Saxons, who reduced their city by fire, while they sought refuge higher up the Severn, on the woody and marshy peninsula now the site of Shrewsbury. The whole weight of this tradition rests upon the supposition that Dduille Vrecon means the *City* instead of the *Hill-fortress* of the Wrekin. After the last conflagration of the city, whether by Saxon or Dane, it became a convenient stone-quarry to other architects. Several edifices in the neighbourhood are supposed to be built of the materials, among which are Atchem Church, situated upon the river Tern, about a mile higher than Wroxeter; and Buildwas Abbey, itself now a ruin upon the banks of the Severn, two or three miles below. In the lapse of time, a stratum of soil gathered above the ruins; but the city could not be forgotten while the gray old wall stood to arrest the curious passer-by, and to attract the investigating antiquary. Mr Thomas Wright, the antiquary, a native of Shropshire, long regarded it with interest, and at his suggestion, Mr Beriah Botfield, M.P. for Ludlow, offered a subscription of L.50 for the excavations, if a further sum of L.50 could be raised. The Shropshire Antiquarian Society entered cordially into the scheme, and a committee was immediately appointed, with funds considerably exceeding the stipulated sum. Permission was granted by the owner of the lands, the Duke of Cleveland, and by the farmer who held them; the excavations were begun on the 3d of February of this year, and with one interruption, which has been too well discussed in the public papers to remain unknown, the work has been carried on up to the present time. A London committee is now formed, and exertions are being made to obtain a government grant, that the excavations may be continued on a scale adequate to the importance and interest of the undertaking.

THE GUILTY THOUGHT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.

'THERE they are coming in at last! How that girl has grown since my Christmas visit! She is still short, I know, but she has shot out of the child into the young woman in a very sudden way. How imprudent those young things are! Slinging her hat over her arm—nothing on her head, and those light curls hanging about her face, almost straight, the dew is so heavy. Don't you think her grown very pretty, Mrs Vivyan?'

The lady thus addressed was sitting at a side-table, which did not command the window out of which the speaker was looking—sitting reading a heavy volume, and from time to time jotting down pencil-notes on a scrap of paper. Of all the preceding sentence, she only seemed to have caught the concluding question.

'Pretty? I daresay Matilda is pretty. But it is a common-place, inexpressive face—very like her mother's in feature, with more brilliancy of colouring.'

'Your son thinks her very pretty—I can see that. There they stand still, so imprudent, in all this dew. How tall he is, how kindly he looks down upon her! My dear Mrs Vivyan, does it never strike you that Arthur admires her a good deal?'

Mrs Vivyan did not reply, but this time she heard every word spoken. Rising, she looked out of the window; her face was flushed, her dark eye anxious. When she sat down again, she was very pale.

The old lady in the window went on with her knitting all the time; and after a few moments, went on with her observations as well.

'I'm sure, my dear Mrs Vivyan, I've always said your kindness to the Thomson family was beyond all praise. What you did for poor Mrs Thomson during her long illness, and then ever since to think of your sending Matilda to school, and having her here in the holidays. No doubt, a young creature makes the house cheerful; and, though it never seems to me that she suits you very well, you have got fond of her. But, dear me, I should not think—not that you would care much for fortune, I know—but, altogether I should say, Matilda Thomson could never be a fit match for young Mr Viv'——

'Hush!' cried Mrs Vivyan in so imperious a tone that good old Mrs Roper stopped in the middle of the word, and took off her spectacles in her agitation. 'No idea could be so preposterous, so unnatural, so entirely out of the question. *My* son's taste is too refined; he never would, never could, see any charm in so common-place a little creature as Matilda Thomson. I beg that you will never again allude to such a wild notion. Nay,' she went on less vehemently, 'my good old friend, I am not vexed with you; but it is better never to even hint at so utter an impossibility.'

'I am sure, my dear Mrs Vivyan, I beg your pardon, and I am a foolish old body, I daresay; and indeed, Mr Arthur is your own son in all his ways; so fond of his deep books, and his poetry, which she could not understand much better than I could, I'm pretty certain. It's only a brotherly liking that he has for her, I daresay. Poor Mr Roper often used to say to me: "There you are again, Susan, at your match-making." He declared I turned my head with novels. But I never could see two young creatures together day after day without wondering whether anything was to come of it.' Putting on her spectacles again, she took up her knitting, just as merry voices were heard in the hall; then the door was flung open, and Arthur and his companion came in.

'Look at Mattie, mother, look at her, and tell me whether she is not just like that picture of Undine you admired so much in last year's Exhibition. We've been on the pool, and had a glorious scramble for water-lilies; not many white ones out yet. Mattie brought some home in her hat, and we've been making a wreath of them. Don't examine very closely, or you'll see the string that ties their thick slippery stalks together. There, Mattie, stand just there, and let mother look at you—with all that dishevelled gold—there—just so. Isn't she a picture, mother?' and throwing his arm round his mother's tall and stately figure, he stood and looked admiringly at the young girl before him.

'I cannot say I see the likeness, Arthur,' said Mrs Vivyan in a cold constrained voice. 'The Undine you refer to had large dark eyes, regular features, and a figure the very opposite to Matilda's. You are late this evening. Matilda had promised to copy out for me old Widow Gourlay's letter from her son. I am, not, however, surprised at her disregard of my wish: the pleasure of wearing a fantastic wreath would be enough at any time to fill her mind, to the exclusion of all beside.'

The young girl had coloured at the unflattering contrast Mrs Vivyan had drawn between her and the picture she had been pleased to imagine herself like; the last remark deepened the colour and called the tears into the light-blue eyes. Short; a little too full perhaps; nowise ethereal or dreamy, if you will; no Undine indeed; yet surely Arthur was not wrong in thinking her very lovely as she stood there—timidly, he fancied—sullenly, believed Mrs Vivyan.

'Why, mother, you are hard upon us to-night. Mattie did not forget. She reminded me that the letter had to be copied, else I'm not sure we should have come in yet, 'tis such a heavenly evening. Come, my Undine, kiss the severe goddess, and then run up and re-arrange those pretty curls.'

The girl approached, and throwing her arms round Mrs Vivyan, put up her pink and white face for a kiss. Mrs Vivyan shrank from the clasp.

'Nonsense,' she said; 'I am not demonstrative; and Matilda knows perfectly well that I can distinguish between a caressing and an affectionate nature.'

The young girl hastily turned away, and left the room; Arthur went and stood silently by the window; Mrs Roper knitted as if for life and death. Presently, the mother went up to her son; her voice grew low and tender, and there was a deprecating fondness in her eyes as she laid her hand on his shoulder.

'Your coat is saturated with dew, my boy; do not keep it on any longer. I have been making the notes you wished for from that ponderous monograph. Our German is a bold thinker, darling.' And she passed her fingers through the masses of his dark hair, and looked at him with something of worship mingling with mother-love.

'I think you were rather hard upon Mattie, I must say, mother,' was his reply. 'I can assure you she's a most warm-hearted little pet, and I don't believe she would neglect any wish of yours for the world.'

Mrs Vivyan's face grew hard, and a smile of contempt curled her delicate lip.

'We women are pretty accurate judges of each other's characters, Arthur. I have known Matilda Thomson from her birth; I knew her mother. Believe me, she is as cold and selfish as she is commonplace in mind. He deserves to find himself deceived who seeks a heart in the unthinking. When this damp coat is changed, we will sit down, will we not, to our task?' and again the dark eyes softened.

'Not to-night, mother, thank you; I'm tired and—and out of sorts—chilled, I fancy. I'll have a bit of fire lighted in my den—don't be scandalised, Mrs Roper; fire in July!—and write a letter to old Harness. I promised him an account of myself during the long vacation;' and the young man turned away, not even looking at his mother's face, else the expression of anguish there must have struck him. Before long, Matilda came down; her curls brushed away from her face, her eyes heavy, her colour deepened into a flush. She looked almost plain. Mrs Vivyan wished Arthur could have seen her. The evening wore slowly away; Mrs Roper tried to chat away as usual, but all the subjects she suggested fell flat. The good old lady little guessed what her careless speech had done. Truly, 'we know not what we do when we speak words.' The train she had unwittingly fired had no consequences for her.

Mrs Vivyan sat up late in her room that night, for some time hoping that Arthur would come in as usual for a confidential chat. This had been his habit for years. From his early boyhood, his mother had constituted herself his most intimate friend; had thrown herself into school-boy interests, games, friendships, feuds, with an intelligent sympathy which comes by nature to some few of us, which even strong affection cannot give to others. In his younger days, Arthur had found as much satisfaction in talking over cricket or foot-ball with her as with the best of his school-chums. She never forgot or confused any of the incidents so important to him at that time; never confounded Jones, who batted so splendidly on our side at the last match but one, with that snob Jones, who unexpectedly bowled us out this midsummer. Further, she never preached or prosed over deeds of audacious fun, or inculcated virtues out of school-boy reach. To be true, brave, kind to the weak, this she always assumed a thing of course in her boy; and with this she was content. Now that he had grown up to be a man, his confidence had changed its character, but it was very nearly as unreserved. He took his theoretical difficulties to his mother, as he had done his boyish scrapes. They read, discussed, inquired together. They were still most intimate friends. Surely, he would come to-night as usual? No—that is his step, lightly coming up the stairs passing her door. He is not coming! And then one of those lightning flashes of dread prophecy that come to us all at some life-crisis or other, revealing a long vista of years all hopelessly different from the precious past, severed from it by how short a time, by how slight a circumstance, but severed from it for ever! How shall we live on through them! The poor mother had no power to follow her boy to his room, else she might have learned the reason, or at least *a* reason, why he had passed her by.

He, too, had been visited by certain lightning-flashes as he smoked his pipe that night in his own peculiar den. That sweet little Mattie, how pretty she was getting, to be sure! How silken those straightened curls were! His fingers thrilled still as he recalled the arranging of that lily wreath. Certainly his mother was unjust to that gentle, innocent young girl. He could plainly remember now, that she had never really loved her. From out the hitherto forgotten past, pictures detached themselves, grew vivid, significant. He saw Mattie, a poor, puny little thing then, stand timidly before his mother, convicted of some childish prevarication. No fault of *his* had ever called forth that look on Mrs Vivyan's face. It was not anger—it was silent, careless contempt. He saw it all now—it was injustice, prejudice. She had never given Mattie fair-play; always chosen to consider that she was weak; weak indeed, dear little soul! How she raised her blue eyes to him this evening as he repeated those lines of Tennyson. How fully she entered into their feeling! After all, he thought, a woman may have too much intellect. There's a wondrous charm in softness and pliability; 'tis very sweet to mould a tender nature to one's will. How pleasant this vacation had been; how happy those long evening walks with his little sister, as he had been used to call her—he was glad she was not his sister, though—and how strange that he had not found out before how very dear the little thing had become to him. He thought his mother's coldness must have had something to do with it. He never could bear at school to see any one bullied or put upon—and after all, no bullying could be half so hard to bear as that stately courtesy, that contemptuous kindness—so, of course, it was only natural that the little pet should turn to him. To-day, when he had talked of going over to see old Harness, the tears had risen into her blue eyes, 'blue as the blue forget-me-not,' tears to kiss away, if they rose again.

No wonder that Arthur feared to disturb his mother that night. Meanwhile, Mrs Roper, good easy woman, comfortably unconscious herself this long time past, had contrived to murder sleep in Matilda's room too. That little brain, however Mrs Vivyan might estimate its powers, was busily at work to-night. Four years at a boarding-school had infused therein an amount of worldly wisdom which would have amazed Arthur not a little could he only have read it through those childlike eyes. Matilda had never loved Mrs Vivyan; but to-night, oh! she almost hated her. Yes, she knew what she meant about that picture. It was only to make Arthur think her ugly, and awkward, and, O horror! too fat; for, like many other girls of sixteen, Matilda much underrated the charm of her fair, firm, full *embonpoint*, and would willingly, had it but been possible, have had a wasp's waist, and cheeks thin and pale. But Arthur *did* not think her ugly; she was sure of that, and so Mrs Vivyan might say what she liked; only it was cruel, and unfair, and unkind; and if her own mother had lived, she would not have dared to have done so; and something of yearning tenderness mingled with the young girl's tears of vexation, and in the train of this softening influence came a recollection of all the benefits Mrs Vivyan had conferred since that mother's death. But benefits will never buy love. Matilda reasoned the case out thus: 'Yes, I know it's very kind of her—at least, so they say at school—to pay for my education, and all that; but after all, it is only that I may be a governess, I daresay; and if she had let me go to poor mamma's old aunt, I might have been just as happy, though she *was* poor. It was not to please me that Mrs Vivyan took charge of me; I was a little thing of eight, and should have liked one thing as well as another. Poor mamma used to kiss me, and love me, and scold me; Mrs Vivyan never scolds me even. She always seems to take it as a thing of course that I should make mistakes in my lessons, and be low down in my class. I daresay, if I were to *steal*, it would not surprise her. She kisses me night and morning, but I might as well kiss the statue in the hall. Nobody loves me, unless it is Arthur; the girls at school laugh at me about him. How handsome he is. Mrs Vivyan is always insinuating that I am so cold-hearted; I am sure I love Arthur, and I think he will not like my being a governess.' And then the thought passed out of words into visions, gorgeous and fast-shifting, but always with two or three central facts unchanged; Matilda rustling in silks and satins; Arthur looking at every change of attire with the same look that he gave this evening to the lily-wreath; and Mrs Vivyan living at the cottage in the grounds, or perhaps at the old vicarage in the village, half a mile off; Matilda condescendingly driving there to see her, and sometimes taking her flowers or fruit.

But to return to Mrs Vivyan. The late moon has risen now, and throws a cold light on the mist that covers the whole park, the stately trees rising like islands out of it. Last night, there was just the same mist. She and her boy had stood and admired its lake-like surface together; now, how ghastly she thought it—like the sheet spread over the dead! Oh, what did it mean, this strange weight at the heart?—what was it, after all, that had happened? Was it likely that a young man of Arthur's refined, fastidious taste should choose for his wife Matilda Thomson, inferior in character as in position, the daughter of a bankrupt attorney—the dull, little, uninteresting girl he had known for years without giving her a thought, save of careless good-nature? No; it was most unlikely indeed, and she was torturing herself for no cause.

In the morning, she should have forgotten entirely the anguish of this night; in the morning, that foolish old woman's idly spoken notion would seem again the impossibility it was. But why, and how, it may be asked, was this young girl the protégée of the proud Mrs Vivyan; and how came it that a heart in which mother's love reached such fulness of devotion—a heart generous and sympathising to all—should have had no tenderness to spare for a helpless orphan? We must glance back many years before we come to the solution of this mystery.

When Clare Forester, without any other fortune than her stately beauty and strong intellect, married Tom Vivyan, the handsome, good-humoured owner of a fine unencumbered estate, the best rider, the best shot, the 'best fellow' altogether in the whole county, the world in general—that is, that particular neighbourhood—was almost unanimous in pronouncing her a most fortunate girl; nor were they much less ready to acknowledge the good-fortune of the bridegroom. And yet, fair-seeming as its promise was, this was far from proving a happy union to either party. Clare's affection for her husband was somewhat imperious and exacting in its nature. She wanted the impossible. To be intensely loved by a man who never had an intense feeling of any kind, who took life easily and good-humouredly as a 'may-game,' with its ins and outs, certainly, and rubs now and then, but still a merry game; who had a pleasant word for every one, and for his wife a genuine admiration, an honest tenderness, that had looked very like passionate devotion during their brief courtship, and never sunk below a measure of affection and indulgence that would have satisfied any woman of calmer, happier temperament. But Clare Vivyan was not satisfied; she grew silent, cold, reserved. Never did an angry word cross her lips; what was there to be angry about? The fault was in his nature, not his conduct; and gradually Mr Vivyan began to feel a degree of constraint in her society; to suspect vaguely that she looked down upon him; to wonder how it was they once suited each other so perfectly, and had always so much to say; and, finally, to revert mentally, from time to time, to a certain Matilda Davis, whose round figure, flaxen curls, and sky-blue eyes, had charmed his youthful fancy during his college-days, and to speculate whether, after all, he might not have had a sunnier home with that merry, good-humoured, little, commonplace mortal for its presiding influence, than with this incomprehensible wife of his. Poor Matilda; he wondered what had become of her. That good-for-nothing attorney, Thomson, had thought of her, he knew; but he hoped old Mr Davis never gave his consent to *that*. Strange, how completely he had forgotten that once prominent episode; stranger, perhaps, how vividly it returned to his memory now.

The estrangement between Mr and Mrs Vivyan's hearts and sympathies never betrayed itself by such outward and visible signs as the neighbourhood, or even their own household, might take cognizance of. They still passed for an attached and happy couple. The second summer after her marriage, Mrs Vivyan had a new and absorbing source of interest: her first, her only child, was born. Out of her great happiness, she had fresh smiles and sweetness to spare for all. She gave back much of her first love to her husband, because his deep gray eyes were so like her Arthur's. The father grew very dear again, for the child's sake; and being, as we have already said, an easy, happy-tempered man, he was quite satisfied with his secondary place in his wife's heart, so that he saw her bright and cheerful once more. His outdoor sports engaged him much, but when he came home, his evenings were again pleasant; Mrs Vivyan would greet him, radiant and smiling, with her baby in her arms. There was always enough to talk of now. But Clare was, and always had been, an idolater. From her childhood upwards, she had never been without some special object on which to concentrate the intense love of which her nature was capable. She did not remember her parents; but for many years her nurse, who had lived with them, was all in all to her little passionate heart. Later, Mrs Maude Forester, her aunt, the cultivated sprightly old lady, who never checked, never blamed her darling any more than her nurse did, had superseded her in Clare's affections. Then came Tom Vivyan, and all former loves paled as that great light rose to rule the day of her early womanhood. How she had idealised him! how she had worshipped! how she had suffered! But now she was safe from disappointment. In this new love for her child there never could be any bitterness; here she should crave for no proportionate return. She knew now—she had grown wiser in many ways hanging over that baby's cradle—that her nature's tendency was to expect too much from those she loved; but here was an affection inherently free from that taint. So she thought; and yet the very nurses saw that if by any chance the baby stretched out his little arms to them when she was near, the mother turned pale. Ah, well, this did not often happen. Not one of them tossed him so high, or sang to him so merrily, or had such long curls to pull, as she. Those were happy days in the nursery; but happier still when the boy began to speak and listen, and run eagerly here and there under his mother's eye.

For three years, life had flowed on very peacefully with the Vivyans, when one day at breakfast, the letters being brought as usual to Mr Vivyan, his wife observed that he started at the sight of one of them, opened it hurriedly, and, having glanced over its contents, appeared still more discomposed. Evidently, it was a woman's letter—the small characters, the crossed sheets, shewed that plainly enough. He was in the habit of reading his letters to her, or, still oftener, of tossing them across the table that she might read them to him. This letter he hurriedly thrust into his pocket, and soon left the room. A sharp pang shot through Mrs Vivyan's heart. What letter was this that so agitated her somewhat imperturbable husband, which she might not see? He had no sisters, cousins, female friends. And, oh! over and over again, he had vowed to her that she was the only woman he had ever really loved. While she sat lost in painful wondering and vain surmising, she heard the prancing of horse's feet on the gravel, and looking out, saw the groom leading and trying to soothe a fiery chestnut Mr Vivyan had bought a day or two before.

The next moment, her husband came into the room. 'I've had a letter that has vexed me a good deal, Clare—a sad account of an old friend.' And he took out the long crossed sheet, and seemed about to give it her. She reached out her hand for it, with an expression of interest and sympathy.

'No, no; women have such an exaggerated way of writing. The fact is, Clare, before I ever saw you, I had a boyish fancy for this poor, pretty girl. I don't know what foolish notions we may have had in our heads at the time; my uncle would not hear of it, and I was very young. She, poor thing, seems never to have forgotten those early days. Well, then, to cut my story short: she married—a low fellow, a rascally attorney, and he has used her like a brute, and now he has run away altogether, leaving her penniless, and on the eve of her confinement. Her father, who would never see her after her marriage, has died, and cut her off with a shilling. It's dreadful to think of what she has gone through. I must have a good gallop to get me over the shock her letter has given me, and then we'll talk the matter over, and see what can be done. You'll help me, Clare, to see my way?' And stooping down, he was going to kiss her pale cheek, when she rose, and moving a little away, stood before him, cold and silent.

'Clare,' said Mr Vivyan, 'I swear to you that from the first hour I knew you, the very recollection of poor Mattie faded from my mind. I thought, indeed, you were the only woman I had ever loved; but early impressions are strong. Come, Clare, give me a kiss, and call Arthur to see me mount. That chestnut's a spirited thing. It will do me good to break it in, this morning. Good-bye, my queen!' Not a word, not a look, the cheek still turned away. Mr Vivyan shrugged his shoulders, and dashed down stairs. Not many hours after, he was brought back, a dying man. He had urged his new horse to a leap beyond its powers. It had rolled back, fearfully crushing its rider. 'You'll kiss me now, Clare,' Mr Vivyan had said, as she had hung over him in her distraction. 'Take care of Mattie.' That evening, Mrs Vivyan was a widow.

What she suffered, no one, perhaps, could have guessed—no one who had not seen that parting. There was the hidden sting of her great sorrow. Even her boy's caresses could not heal that. Her only consolation must be to carry out her husband's last wishes. This woman! She read her letter by the coffin where he lay. For him, her heart had nothing but tenderness. Good, kind to her always, whether he loved her or not, her Arthur's father! Could she but call him back to witness her agony; could he but know how faithfully she would obey that last injunction! But this woman! Well, it should be her expiation to seek her out, to care for her as a sister might. She did so. In less than a month from Mr Vivyan's death, Matilda Thomson, with a little sickly boy of two years old, was installed in a pretty cottage in the grounds, and there her daughter, the Mattie of our story, was born. For eight years, Mrs Vivyan shewed an unvarying kindness of conduct. When the puny boy fell sick and died; when the mother's own health began to fail; Mrs Vivyan was munificent in providing the best advice, appliances, solace of every kind. Mrs Thomson's presence was torture to her, but she never flinched. Weak, querulous, egotistical, the only thing in which the invalid seemed to take much pleasure was in alluding to the early attachment that had existed between Mr Vivyan and herself; her vanity dwelt upon this till it magnified it far beyond its actual extent. Mrs Vivyan's kindness was taken by her very much as a matter of course, and awoke no gratitude. 'She was bound to carry out poor Mr Vivyan's wishes,' reasoned Mrs Thomson, dreaming of greater benefits still that would have resulted had he but lived, till at length his death appeared to her ineffable selfishness to have been a greater loss to her than to his noble-hearted widow and promising boy. But Mrs Vivyan fulfilled her mission bravely to the end. She gave liberally, delicately, graciously; she gave all except love and tenderness, the only gifts 'twice blessed;' all others, unaccompanied by these, deteriorate him 'who takes,' perhaps him who gives also. Certainly, Mrs Thomson grew more and more ungrateful; perhaps Mrs Vivyan grew more and more contemptuous. When the end came, the orphan Mattie was taken up to the Hall, where she remained till the age of twelve; Arthur's playmate during the holidays, but never a favourite of his in his boyhood. He complained of her as so slow—so dull—she never understood any of the most circumstantial descriptions of his boyish games; she had no fun in her; and he had been heard to call her sly. It was only during the present summer that their relation to each other seemed to have changed. It was only Mrs Roper's thoughtless remark that revealed to the mother the horrible possibility on the very verge of which she had been letting her darling stand. What had blinded her so fatally to a danger that good old lady could see at once?

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF A YOUTH OUT OF LUCK.

From my infancy, I, Benjamin Cavil, have been out of luck, without ever having been able to ascertain the reason, if reason has anything to do with the point, which many experienced people deny. Never did I tell a fib that it was not instantly detected, nor commit the smallest sin without being exposed and punished for it within half an hour. Other boys went out of bounds, while, if I did but sit on the boundary-wall, I was seen, hauled down, polished off mercilessly, and turned into a public example. If I happened to join with my school-fellows in thinning a neighbouring orchard, the farmer and his big dog Watcher were sure to come out, and it was always I who was sure to be left, in a double sense, 'up the tree.' If a door slammed, it was my fingers that were trapped; if a drawer were too hastily closed, it was my baby-nails that were blackened; if a hockey-stick flew out of any one's hand, it was towards my head it always bent its flight. Why was I to be always found out and flogged, while my fellows laughed, my brother jeered, my father threatened, my mother wept, and our clergyman denounced, until, as he said—I doubt not truly—he was worn out? Statists tell us that a certain number of accidents happen, under ordinary circumstances, to a certain number of human beings; that every year so many heads are fractured by so many pokers; and so many men die every shooting-season from the untoward discharge of so many guns. It is true that Boxer declared that common sense might have foreseen, and my father affirmed that ordinary prudence might have averted, many of my misfortunes; but I never thought so myself, and it is easy to be wise after the event. I purpose giving a specimen of my experience for the last two or three days, and then, if the reader be wiser than I have been, he can solve the question for himself.

'Who has been meddling with my boots?' inquired my father (Allport Cavil, Esq.), one morning, as, in much exasperation, he regarded what should have been very respectable coverings for the extremities of an elderly gentleman.

I had for some time been lounging about the breakfast-table with my eye on the articles in question, intending to convey them away in a swift and subtile manner; I had my own reasons for considering his present question as a general one, not referring to any person in particular; and I became immediately intent on the lively and interesting pages of the *Morning Megatherium*.

'Benjamin, be obliging enough to ring the bell. My boots look as if they had been dipped in a tar-barrel. Ring it twice, sir, and loudly. If it is necessary to examine the whole household, I will learn who has treated my boots so shamefully.' I rose with affected alacrity to do as desired. 'Look at these boots, sir,' continued my father, frowning dreadfully.

I dared not refuse, so I looked at them, making a desperate attempt to appear at my ease. 'Ah! yes sir, I see. My new blacking. Very good effect, has it not? So brilliant! And it does not come off either.' I touched it with my finger as I spoke, rather unfortunately, as it happened, for a broad black stain instantly transferred itself, on which I smiled spasmodically, and secretly wiped it off on the bosom of my shirt.

Papa seemed to swell with indignation, and his face grew scarlet: 'And why, sir, did you suffer me to ring the bell, sir, when you knew perfectly well that you were the real culprit? And now you wish to persuade me that you have benefited my boots, sir, with that stuff—that stuff. You shall black your own boots with it, sir. I'll see them done myself. And you shall take this, and scrape it off, sir.' I took up the boots daintily between the tips of my thumb and finger. 'What vile composition is it, sir, that you touch it that way?'

I contrived, though with great effort, to smile, as if nothing had happened, until I reached the door, through which I darted with extreme haste. It was certainly provoking that papa came down so early, and went straight to the very corner of the room where I had deposited his boots to dry; it was also unfortunate that they had not dried: but that is always my luck; instead of thanks, I receive reproaches, for benefits which are rendered nugatory only by the impatience of the parties. I had made the blacking with my own hands, after a very curious receipt of undoubted excellence. So I betook myself to the pantry to obey the parental orders, and scrape it off with my clasp-knife. In doing so, I happened to cut a slice out of one boot—at least I shaved off the little sort of creation on it which papa always has made for the convenience of his bunion.

'O Benjie, you had better let me do it.'

I turned round at that sympathising voice, and beheld dear little 'Dot,' my sister, who never snubs me, as every one else does. She is very little, so little that her head only just reached the top of the sink into which she tried to peep. However, she could see the bunion-house floating about on the top of the water.

'Look here, Dot; I've blacked the governor's boots with my newly invented and highly commended blacking, and then, instead of thanking me, he's as mad as a hatter, and *will* have it scraped off.'

'It's very nice blacking,' she said doubtfully; 'but it wants some more dry in it, I think.'

I shewed her that it dried fast enough on to the paint-brush; in demonstrating this fact, I jerked it until the hairs came out in a bunch. I was a little dismayed, for that brush I had borrowed, without remembering to mention it, of my brother Boxer, who is rather close about lending his property.

'Never mind,' chirruped the dear little soul, 'I'll stick it in.'

'Do,' I said, 'at any rate, in a temporary way.'

Then I let off the tap, to wash away the parings and scrapings; and it poured away very effectually until I was made aware, by a tremendous gurgling and sucking, that the waste-pipe was stopped up. I had not time to unstop it then, so I left it for the next who came; then taking Dot's hand, I returned to the breakfast-room, and quietly placed the scraped boots in such a position that the round hole need not be at first perceived, and tied a knot on my pocket-handkerchief, in order to make me remember that I must buy a bit of sticking-plaster to cover it. When we entered, the governor was regaling Boxer with an account of his wrongs. If I had told further the concluding stroke of skill, what storming and sneering there would have been. Boxer is such a fellow for the practical, his hands look like working instruments, and are chopped all over; marked here with a hole, there with an excrescence; one nail is black and blue with being jammed, another is charred with a hot iron, and on a third scalding lead or melting wax has left marks ineffaceable. He is a mighty carpenter; he can pick locks, and make chairs, and break up every useful bit of wood he gets hold of. He never forgets himself, in one sense, nor any one else, in another, and scarcely ever fails in what he undertakes. He never undertakes very much, though, and is very hard on those who do, and fall short of it. He was down on me in an instant, as I knew he would be.

'So you have been blacking the governor's boots with pitch, Ben?'

I pretended not to hear, and pushed the hot buttered roll over to him, in hopes of stopping his mouth.

'Have you read the last number of the *Lancet?*' said papa, who seemed determined to pursue unpalatable subjects.

(I ought to mention that I am an unhappy medical student.) Of course I hadn't. I put my hand to my forehead, and frowned as if to recollect. Boxer grinned revoltingly. Papa went on at it again; just as, when a young hare won't run before the dogs, they kick her up again until she does.

'Well, sir, what have you to say about it? Can you make any one single observation which shall evince even ordinary industry?'

'What was there particular in it, sir? Was it that case of aneurism?' (This at a venture.)

'I asked *you*, sir,' said papa, with an ominous calm —he is always at his worst when he is calm.

There was no answer to his query, only a silence, and I blew my nose to break it—the silence I mean.

'And, by the way,' continued papa, who had apparently a string of my misdeeds in his pocket, and was telling them off as a nun tells her beads—'by the way, sir, Dr Ruffisch complains to me that you sent a cinder, a common black cinder, in the last bottle of medicine which he had occasion to order for Lady M'Tug; and he wishes to know if he is to lose all his best patients through your carelessness—your shameful and reprehensible carelessness, sir?'

I was consigning my handkerchief to my pocket, when the knot drew his attention.

'Is it your custom to knot and destroy your handkerchiefs in that way, when I have to pay for them?'

'It was to remind me, sir,' I began—and here I stopped short; I dared not say why I had tied that knot. I muttered something about an important case, and lectures, and being in time, and under cover of that I bolted. I soon reached the surgery, where for two long years I had pounded, and mixed, and copied, and blundered; where I had also practised upon my cornopean and smoked my short clay. Jones, the doctor's groom, and a particular chum of mine, was on the look-out for me.

'Oh, Master Ben, here be a Hirish woman and her family a-hollering most awful with her tooth.'

I don't think anything delights me more than the prospect of an operation of this sort. It is different to doing it at the hospital, quite; there are no fellows to quiz one's proceedings, or chaff one if one draws the wrong tooth; and, indeed, even in drawing a wrong tooth, I have generally found that the greater pain scares away the lesser one, and the party retires more than satisfied. In the surgery, I am king; that is, so long as Dr Ruffisch does not appear. You should see the calmness with which I turn up my coat-cuffs and examine the necessary instruments, giving to each, by way of preliminary, its appropriate exercise in the palm of my hand. I give the scruncher a preparatory scrunch; the prodder a succession of lunges; and lastly, I hook out imaginary teeth with the great hook of agony, keeping all the time my eye steadily fixed on the patient, and thus giving that individual a foretaste of what is to be undergone. By this practice, just as a certain famous French *tragédienne* is said to watch the contortions of the miserable wretches at the large hospitals in France, I have often been enabled at our supper-parties to reproduce a suffering Irishman to the life. If I had been born a strolling player, I should have made my fortune; but I am always such an unlucky fellow. Meanwhile, the distressed relatives were, as Jones expressed it, 'a-hollering most awful.' I induced the Irish lady to seat herself in a chair.

'Please, sir, could you mesmerise Norah, and make the cretur's pain less?'

I would have done it with pleasure; there is nothing more to my fancy than experiments, but it was unprofessional either to mesmerise or to take any one's advice; besides, I happened to know that I had been rather unlucky in the single case of that description which I had undertaken. No one would willingly allow me to experiment on their nerves, so I had seized on one little errand-lad, and succeeded in first sending him into a sleep, and then into convulsions; for this reason, I took no notice of the man's suggestion, further than to exhibit a professional frown, but proceeded to place the prod into a tooth haphazard, surmising that, if struck upon, the diseased one would betray itself by the degree of noise that followed. I was not wrong, for a tremendous yell succeeded. I rashly introduced my finger without taking the precaution of placing anything between the jaws, and in an instant the tigress had closed those massive portals, and crushed it until I could have yelled as loudly as any of them. With difficulty, I repressed the inclination, and extricated myself; then, out of revenge, I marshalled her friends outside the door, and locked it. This was the signal for a chorus of Irish howls and Banshee wails. I looked through the keyhole, and saw the barbarians squatted in a semicircle, rending the air with their cries. I set to work, and soon the din of the interior equalled that outside. It sounded like the chorus of 'O Baal, hear us,' when suddenly there was an authoritative knock at the door. I hastened to throw it open; behind me was the Irish woman with her handkerchief stuffed into her mouth. There was Dr Ruffisch, accompanied by a fashionable-looking man. With the tact natural to me, I explained matters. 'Ah, sir, a poor Irishwoman, you see—distracted relatives—somewhat uncouth; pray, walk in.'

The doctor eyed the whole scene with distaste, and me with prophetic vengeance. They only stood a couple of minutes, but I thought their coming at all a very needless interruption to business. As the doctor went out, he said: 'No more such disreputable displays, sir; but get to some work—do.'

My first proceeding was to send our boy Joe for a pint of pale ale. As he gave it me, I said: 'What's the matter with you, Joe? You look white.'

'There be nothing the matter with me, Master Ben.' He lied, and he knew it, and he knew that I knew it; but he was aware I was always on the lookout for chance practice.

'You have a headache, Joe.'

'No, indeed, Master Ben; I have not.'

'Why, Joe, how can you assert that, when symptoms of cephalagia are as plain on you as the nose on your face. Why, your eyes are visibly affected.' This, I saw, impressed him.

'Well, I do think I have a pain in my head.'

'Ah, you do.'

'Ees, I do, now you say so.'

'Well, Joe, I'll give you a draught, which will act like Sweeting's Elixir, and make you say "Ha, ha—cured in an instant." I deliberated a little (that always looks well), while Joe stood before me with an expression of unmanly fear. A bottle of soda-water I have always found cured my headaches best; I determined, therefore, to give him one; but, alas! I had used up the last. I could, however, easily compose one; and it struck me that, as there is always a waste of the effervescing gas in pouring it into a glass, I could increase the efficacy of the dose to an almost unlimited degree, by mixing it internally, and, as it were, turning Joe into a bottle of soda-water. I put into a tumbler, half filled with water, 60 grains of potassa-bi-carb., and into another, 40 grains of citric acid, and allowed their respective contents thoroughly to dissolve. Then I made him take off his neck-handkerchief, unfasten his shirt-collar, and swallow first the water containing the potassa; and when it had had time to settle, partly by force, and partly by persuasion, I made him take the other. The consequences were instantaneous. He got up and rushed franticly round the little room, uttering the most extraordinary sounds, and holding his two sides, as if he was afraid of exploding.

'How do you feel, Joe?' I said calmly.

'As if I was agoin' to bust,' he replied.

'Well,' thought I, 'it shan't happen here, if I can help it;' so I opened the door, and out he bolted, and after running round and round the yard, he subsided into the coal-hole. Then I drank my pale ale; and sincerely wishing poor Joe's head better, I lit my short clay, and proceeded quite at my ease to cut out a bit of sticking-plaster for papa's boot, feeling tolerably certain that the doctor, who hated the smell of tobacco, would not be back for some hours. But I am the most unlucky fellow in the world; the Philistines were nearer than I suspected; and presently Dr Ruffisch marched in. I popped my pipe, all burning, into my pocket, and snatching up the *Principles and Practice of Medicine*, which fortunately lay on the table, I was instantly buried in study.

'Well, Mr Cavil, what have you been doing to Joe? What infernal decoction have you administered to him?'

I had at first poked the fire, to conceal my agitated face, but now I faced him, and sitting down on the hard stool (*he* had taken possession of my easy padded chair), was instantly made sensible by a crunching noise, and slight smouldering smell, that I was seated on my pipe, and had broken it all to little bits. 'He said he had a headache, sir (how lucky that I had extorted that confession from Joe), so I gave him an effervescent draught, and flatter myself that I have cured him.' I had hardly uttered these words, than I felt such an intolerable heat, that I could sit no longer, so hastily jumping up, and holding off my coat-tails, by sticking my hands into the pockets, I began tidying things, and setting the room to rights.

'Sir,' said Dr Ruffisch, 'you are an unfortunate gascon—not by birth, but by nature and necessity.' Still I continued taking down one thing and putting up another, until I deemed it quite safe to resume my seat. Meanwhile he eyed me severely, and I thought ungenerously. At last, when I had fussed about long enough, I sat down.

'Mr Cavil.'

'Sir?'

'Be kind enough to hand me from the third shelf that volume of Pinel on Insanity.' I did so, with not the slightest conception what he was going to do. He opened it, and read sonorously, the following obnoxious passage. Pinel gives this lively description of the condition of fools: 'He approaches me, looks at me, and overwhelms me with his loquacity. Immediately after, he treats another in the same manner. If he comes into a room, he turns everything upside down; he displaces, and shakes the chairs and tables, without seeming to have any particular motive. Scarcely have you taken your eye off him, when you perceive him in a neighbouring promenade, and there as aimlessly busy as in the room. He chatters, throws stones, pulls up weeds, and walks up and down in the same way, over and over again.' He closed the book, and arose pompously enough to leave the room. I hastened to open the door, and bow him out. No, he cannot put me in a bad humour. No one ever did that yet. Hardly a minute, and the Ruffisch face appeared again.

'Sir, I will say this for you, that your good temper is imperturbable,' and he disappeared.

Ha, ha! so I get a very gentlemanly compliment out of the old fellow, after all: but how well I deserved it! I then sat down to ponder over a scheme which I had arranged for the next day. It is a long lane, they say, which has no turning. I could not always be so unlucky, and I hoped to distinguish myself considerably after the hounds. There was a near meet advertised. I was but a feather-weight, and Jones had made an agreement for me with a livery-stable keeper, by which, for the sum of 14s., I was to have the use for one day of a 'perfect 'unter,' so Jones said, 'bold as a lion, and quiet as a lamb, which a child might ride.' One of our fellows was to lend me his father's scarlet coat, who was a committee-man of the Bedford Hunt. It was of great beauty, and, in fact, rather overdid the thing than not, being lined throughout with white silk, with facings of the same, and gilt buttons, on which were inscribed the letters B.U.H.C., for Bedfordshire Union Hunt Club. I learned afterwards that it was the *costume de bal* for the members on high days. Boxer had, I knew, a pair of movable leather-tops, and these I determined to procure somehow. I went home to tea that night, and was so amusing, that I made the governor laugh until the tears ran out of his eyes. My beloved brother, Boxer, had come to grief, having, in some mysterious manner, spiked the fleshy part of his leg on the back of a cab. I dare say he had been riding behind one of these vehicles; but on my venturing to remark as much, this harmless pleasantry had the effect of making him extremely savage. I offered to examine and dress the wound—I could then have easily paid off old scores—but he refused, alleging that he had done it himself. I daresay he had; for they said he had cut, and scraped, and probed it until it was perfectly awful to look at. Thus the lion was in the toils; Boxer was laid on the sofa, in a bed of shavings, manufacturing a gun-stock out of a bit of wood. About nine, I left, and taking care to shut the front-door with a noise which shook the house, I crept up stairs into his room, and secreted the leather leggings. They were such as are usually dubbed 'archiepiscopals,' on account of clergymen patronising them extensively. I suppose my footsteps had not been so light as could have been wished, for the library-door opened, and papa, with a candle in his hand, was in the hall in a moment, vociferating that there was a man's step in the house. I squatted down in the dark on the stairs, and listened. I heard Boxer say: 'I daresay that fellow Ben is sneaking about the house somewhere.' I should have managed very well in my position if the housemaid had not fallen on me in coming down stairs. She set up a most dreadful shriek, and I coiled myself up, and rolled away like a hedgehog. I heard her run down crying with fright, and declaring there was a ghost about the house. I then hid the leggings in the coach-house, and slipped back to the surgery. As all this was to be a secret, my great point naturally was to manage so that papa should suppose I was with Dr Ruffisch, and that Dr Ruffisch should infer I was at home. I slept soundly, and early next day donned my pink, slipped a loose coat over it, and rang at our door-bell at home. When the housemaid let me in, she said they were at prayers; I recommended secrecy to her, and went through the kitchen, dropped my great-coat *en passant*, and reached the coach-house safely. I had just fastened on one legging, when I heard papa's step at the back-door. He was sure to visit the coach-house. There was no time to be lost; so I darted into the stable-lane, a long narrow strip enclosed by two high walls; at the gate, I knew my hunter was waiting. I think papa must have seen my scarlet swallow-tails fly across the yard, for he actually pursued me. I stood close to the wall, wishing I could squeeze myself into it, or 'be hurled anywhere, anywhere out of the world.' I made a dart at the gate: it would not open; I flew back to my original position. The heavy door slowly revolved on its hinges, and Allport Cavil, Esq., cautiously put his head through the opening; he looked up, he looked down, and he espied—me. I throw the favourite veil which novelists speak of over the scene which followed: how I had to enter the room where Boxer lay this time reposing with a finished gun-stock in his arms; how he claimed the leather top I had on my leg, and the one I carried in my hand; how he asked if I had gone to Nathan for the coat; and, finally, how papa went out and found my hunter at the gate. It is no use harrowing up any one's feelings by further description. I was always an unlucky fellow, and shall be so to the end of my life.

A LOST PLACE OF AMUSEMENT.

Memento after memento of olden London has been sacrificed to the insatiable appetite of that metropolitan cormorant, the Builder; and now, after an existence of nearly two centuries as a place of public amusement, Vauxhall is doomed to inevitable destruction. This time there is no reprieve; the work of demolition has already commenced; and ere many months have elapsed, its lovers' walks and whilom musical groves will have given place to rows of brick deformity.

Vauxhall is, or rather was, the oldest place of entertainment in town. Local tradition, with its pleasant contempt for probability, insists upon associating its name with that of the hero of the 5th of November, probably because the gunpowder plotters held their meetings in Lambeth. In reality, it derives its cognomen from Fulke de Breauté, a stalwart Norman soldier of fortune, who, being in the good graces of King John, received the hand of Margaret de Ripariis, and with it this estate, on which a manor-house was built, called Fulkes or Faukes Hall. The estate afterwards became the property of the crown, from which it was alienated under the Protectorate, to return to it with the Restoration.

The opening of the Gardens as a place of entertainment took place in 1661, when Evelyn pronounced it 'a pretty contrived plantation;' it was then called the New Spring Garden (to distinguish it from Spring Garden at Charing Cross), by which name it continued to be known until 1798, and to the last it was licensed under the original designation. In two years from its opening, the New Spring Garden had become a favourite resort of the courtiers and citizens. Pepys went there to observe the humours of the visitors, 'pulling off cherries and God knows what,' and found much satisfaction therein, there being 'a great deal of company, and the weather and garden pleasant; and it is very cheap and pleasant going thither, for a man may go to spend what he will or nothing, all as one. But to hear the nightingale and the birds, and here fiddles, and there a harp, and here a Jew's trump; and here laughing, and there fine people walking, is mighty diverting;' although the good secretary's pleasure was somewhat marred by seeing the confidence of the vice of the age, and his notions of propriety scandalised by the pranks of Harry Killegrew, young Newport, and other scapegraces, 'as very rogues as any in town,' whose mad talk at supper made his heart ache.

Etherege, Vanbrugh, and Congreve allude to the gaieties of Spring Gardens. Wycherley talks of eating syllabub and breaking a cheesecake there; and one of Sir Charles Sedley's heroines reproaches her lover for paying too particular and assiduous attention to a flame-coloured petticoat in New Spring Gardens.

That sly rogue, Tom Brown, says: 'The ladies that have an inclination to be private take delight in the close walks of Spring Gardens, where both sexes meet and mutually serve one another as guides to lose their way; and the windings and turnings in the little wildernesses are so intricate that the most experienced mothers have often lost themselves in looking for their daughters.' It was here that Sir Roger de Coverley was astonished by a bold mask wishing to drink a bottle of mead with him, and having reproved her with proper dignity, solaced himself with hung beef and Burton ale. This was the scene, too, of Cecilia's mortifications, and Harrel's reckless gaiety and mad suicide.

In 1728, Mr Jonathan Tyers became the lessee of the grounds, at a rent of two hundred and fifty pounds per annum; and under his vigorous management the Gardens rose still higher in the public estimation. He commenced his campaign on the 7th of June 1732, with an entertainment called a *Ridetto al Fresco*, at which the Prince of Wales, three hundred gentlemen, and one hundred ladies, assisted; two-thirds of the company wore masks, dominoes, or lawyers' gowns, and order was insured by the presence of one hundred of his Majesty's Foot-guards. Hogarth was an intimate friend of Tyers, and suggested decorating the place with pictures, an idea eagerly adopted by the lessee. The paintings were mostly designed by Hogarth, and their execution intrusted to Hayman. So well pleased was Tyers with the result, that in grateful acknowledgment he presented the former artist with a golden ticket bearing his name and the motto, 'In perpetuam beneficii memoriam.' This ticket conferred the privilege of free admission to six persons in perpetuity; and was used so lately as 1836, since which it has been purchased by Mr Gye for twenty pounds. Roubilliac was indebted to Tyers for his first English commission, the statue of Handel, exhibited at the late Sydenham Festival by its present owners, the Sacred Harmonic Society. Roubilliac also executed some other statues for the Gardens, including one of Milton. Vauxhall was now in the glory of its prime, with its

Verdant vistas, melting sounds,
Magic echoes, fairy rounds,
Beauties everywhere surprise;
Sure the spot dropt from the skies.

It was the opinion of the author of the above lines that the place was especially favoured by Providence, not a single person having ever been drowned of the many thousands of its visitors who had dared the dangers of the Thames in very boisterous weather. Another rhymster thus describes the journey by water, in company with two ladies:

Lolling in state, with one on either side,
And gently pulling with the wind and tide;
Last night, the evening of a sultry day,
We sailed triumphant on the liquid way,
To hear the fiddlers of Spring Gardens play,
To see the walks, orchestra, colonnades,
The lamps and trees in mingled lights and shades.

Nor was it to anonymous or interested pens alone that the Gardens were indebted for hearty panegyric. Fielding declared his powers of description inadequate to give an idea of the extreme elegance and beauty of the place; Addison styled it a Mohammedan paradise; and Goldsmith's Citizen of the World is equally enthusiastic in his praise: 'Lights everywhere glimmering through scarcely moving trees, the full-bodied concert bursting on the stillness of night, the natural concert of the birds in the more retired part of the grove, vieing with that which was formed by art, the company gaily dressed, looking satisfied, and the tables spread with delicacies, all conspired to fill my imagination with the visionary happiness of the Arabian lawgiver, and lifted me into an ecstasy of admiration. "Head of Confucius," cried I, "this is fine; this unites rural beauty with courtly magnificence."' Spring Gardens was a favourite resort of Goldsmith himself; and he and his friend Sir Joshua often moved among the crowd of princes and peers, ambassadors, ministers, wits, beauties, 'agreeable young ladies and gentlemen of eighty-two,' and macaronis in all the glory of their small cocked-hats, tasselled canes, gigantic nosegays, and red heels, who sauntered through the illuminated groves, and supped in the green arbours on

Liliput chickens boiled;
Bucellas warm from Vauxhall ice,
And hams that flit in airy slice,
And salads scarcely soiled.

The prince of letter-writers has recorded a visit he paid to Vauxhall in the company of Lady Caroline Petersham and Lord Granby, whom they picked up 'very drunk,' and prevailed upon to accompany them. 'At last,' writes Walpole, 'we assembled in our booth, Lady Caroline looking gloriously jolly and handsome. She had fetched my brother Orford from the next box, where he was enjoying himself with his *petite partie*, to help us to mince chickens. We minced seven chickens into a china dish, which Lady Caroline stewed over a lamp with three pats of butter and a flagon of water, stirring and rattling and laughing, and we every minute expecting the dish to fly about our ears. She had brought Betty the fruit-girl with hampers of strawberries and cherries from Roger's, and made her wait upon us, and then made her sup by us at a little table—in short, the whole air of our party was sufficient to take up the whole attention of the Gardens; so much so that, from eleven o'clock till half an hour after one, we had the whole concourse round our booth: at last they came into the little garden of each booth on the side of ours, till Harry Vane took up a bumper, and drank their healths, and was proceeding to treat them with still greater freedom. It was three o'clock before we got home.' This is sufficient testimony to the rank and quality of the patrons of Vauxhall in its palmy days, although some satirical versifier put forth the following uncomplimentary lines in one of the daily papers:

Had you, Tyers, each jail ransacked,
Or issued an insolvent act,
Inviting debtors, lords, and thieves,
To sup beneath your smoke-dried leaves,
And there each knave to kindly cram
With fusty chickens, tarts, and ham,
You had not made such a collection
For your disgrace and my dissection!

Under the management of Tyers, the season lasted from May to the end of August, the charge for admission being one shilling, and the attendance averaging one thousand persons. The following was the tariff for 1762: Burgundy, 6s. per bottle; champagne, 8s.; claret, 5s.; Frontiniac, 6s.; hock, with or without sugar, 5s.; Rhenish, with sugar, 2s. 6d.; red port, 2s.; sherry, 2s.; cider, 1s.; table-beer, 4d. per quart; arrack punch, 8s. per quart; a chicken, 2s. 6d.; dish of ham or beef, 1s.; salad, 6d.; cruet of oil, 4d.; orange or lemon, 3d.; ice, 3d. per lb.; sugar for one bottle, 3d.; slice of bread, 1d.; butter, 2d.; cheese, 2d.; tart, 1s.; custard, 4d.; cheesecake, 4d.; Shrewsbury cake, 2d.; heartcake, 2d. Tyers was so satisfied with the result of his speculation, that he purchased the lease of the estate himself, and so much attached to the place was he, that a few hours before his death,—which occurred in 1767—he was carried down to the Gardens to take a last look at what had been the solicitude of his life. It is to be hoped the godfathers of the streets destined to rise upon the ruins of Spring

Gardens will not forget to perpetuate the name of the man of whom the author of *Tom Jones* could write thus: 'To delineate the particular beauties of these Gardens would indeed require as much pains, and as much paper too, as to rehearse the good acts of their master, whose life proves the truth of an observation which I have read in some other writer, that a truly elegant taste is generally accompanied with an excellence of heart, or, in other words, that true virtue is indeed nothing else but true taste.'

In 1822 the descendants of Tyers sold the Gardens to Messrs Bush, Gye, and Hughes, for twenty-eight thousand pounds. The new lessees kept them open till 1840, when they attempted to dispose of the property by auction, but ultimately bought it in for L.20,200. It was then re-opened by Messrs Andrews, Mitchell, and Bunn, with tolerable success, the season of 1843 proving the most successful one in the Vauxhall annals, when 183,279 persons visited the place, and the receipts amounted to L.29,250. The greatest number of people admitted on one evening was 20,300. This was on the revival, in 1833, of the shilling tariff. The price of admission fluctuated considerably from time to time; it remained at one shilling from 1732 to 1792, after which it was raised to two shillings, which included tea and coffee; in 1809 it was three and sixpence; one season it was four shillings; and on the occasion of the Vittoria Fête, in 1814, it rose as high as a guinea.

Of late years, feeble spasmodic efforts have been made to impart vitality to the royal property—it was held under a quit-rent of twenty-three shillings and sevenpence, and a tithe of five shillings a year, payable to the Duchy of Cornwall—with the sole result of putting money into the pockets of umbrella manufacturers; for the opening of Vauxhall was as proverbial for wet weather as royal progresses are for the reverse. The place has long belonged but to the past, with its cosmoramas, fantoccini, artificial ruins, Nassau balloon, concerts d'été, haunted groves, illuminated butterflies, grasshoppers, and white swans; its Lancashire bell-ringers, its magic clock, its heptaplasiesoptron and phoshelionlamproteron light, and the grand displays of pyrotechny of Madame Hengler, Southby, Mottram, and Erntz; its

Catherine wheels and crowns and names
Of great men whizzing in blue flames;
Lights, like the smiles of hope;
And radiant fiery palaces,
Shewing the tops of all the trees,
And Blackmore on the rope.

Even in its degeneracy and decrepitude, we would not speak harshly of the place for which Arne composed, Hogarth and Stanfield painted, and in whose groves have been heard the sweet voices of Storace, Mountain, Bland, Crouch, Brent, Weischel (the mother of Reynolds's Saint Cecilia), Graddon, Love, Tunstall, and Waylett; Grisi, Caradori, and Pasta; Beard, Lowe, Pyne, Incledon, Sinclair, and Braham; Lablache, Tamburini, Rubini, and Mario: where Ducrow and Carolini exhibited their daring and grace, and Ramo Samee his skill; but a younger and more vigorous rival has arisen to push Vauxhall from its throne, and London, instead of weeping over the loss of Vauxhall, will, we suppose, but shout the more lustily, 'Vivat Cremorne!'

THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.

When Moses' rod,
By the power of God,
Tore from its depths th' affrighted wave,
Did your courage sink
As ye reached the brink
Of the sand that covered the seaman's grave?

What wonders met
Your eyes, all wet
With tears the coral branches weep?
Or rapt in thought,
Beheld ye naught
But the crystal walls of the stricken deep?

Yet turn an eye
To the rampart high
Of your straight and deep untrodden lane,
For flowers are there
Of a kind so rare,
That ye ne'er shall see their like again.

There are lofty trees
That the wooing breeze
Of heaven has never kissed before,
Whose every nest
Is a home of rest
For beings your eyes shall meet no more.

O hurl a dart
To the beating heart
Of the serpent gliding swift away,
'Twere worth a world
To watch, unfurled,
Those shining folds in the light of day.

O grasp, O grasp
With a miser's clasp,
The nameless things that round you lie;
Bring up, bring up
Th' enamelled cup
Of coral of deepest scarlet dye!

But vain for speech
To strive to reach
The hearts of men so drowned in awe;
Enough for them
To touch the hem
Of the Ocean's skirts as his feet withdraw.

When his rocky bed
Shall again be spread
To mortal view, a stranger sight
Shall fill our eyes
Than the changing dyes
Of the creeping thing or the coral bright.

When there shall be
No covering sea,
This ground shall shake from coast to coast,
And a rising band
Shall heave the sand,
And follow the tread of a mightier host.

Each hand a blade
Shall grasp, o'erlaid
With leaves and flowers of the ocean's giving,
Through the calm and strife
Of a world's long life—
Like death in the clasp of the fondly living.

And ah! when we
Shall cross the sea,
Our promised land of rest to find,
There is a path
From Pharaoh's wrath
For us who leave our bonds behind.

The Son of God,
With outstretched rod,
Again commands the waves to sever,
And every sin,
As it followeth in,
Is lost in that tideless deep for ever.

R. R.

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AN APOLOGY FOR THE LAW.

THERE is, we believe, no one subject which has such an amount of obloquy attached to it, and so many slanderous speeches directed against it, as 'the law.' Divinity and medicine come in, now and then, for their fair share of abuse, but in those, unworthy professors receive our condemnation more than do the professions themselves. If a clergyman be a poor preacher, or addicted to any particular vice, or if a doctor mistake one complaint for another, or perform an operation unskilfully, it is the clergyman and doctor alone we respectively blame; but if a lawyer misunderstands the law, or prepares his case carelessly, and so allows a verdict to go one way, while popular opinion says it ought to have gone another, a fearful outcry is raised, not against the lawyer, but against the law! 'What a shame it is *the law* should take the bread out of an honest man's mouth, and give it to one wholly unentitled to it!' says one. 'What an abominable thing it is that *the law* cannot be altered, so that instead of people, like poor Mr ——, losing their money when they commence an action against one who has robbed them, they may be able to recover what rightly belongs to them!' exclaims another. Such are the complaints immediately raised, when perhaps, owing to the lawyer employed having never really understood the facts of the case, perhaps in consequence of the thick-headedness or perversity of the jury, or perchance, because the judge himself has committed a blunder, justice is not obtained.

Now, in the few observations we are about to make, we are not for one moment going to argue that the law is perfect, or incapable of even very great improvements; we are indeed fully convinced of the contrary, and all we wish to shew is that, in many instances, 'the —— law is not quite so black as it is painted;' that people too often create difficulties for themselves, from which the law is unequal to deliver them; and that, under such circumstances, they frequently condemn the law, when their own ignorance and carelessness are alone worthy of condemnation.

The dislike of many to the law is founded upon certain cases of which, by tradition or otherwise, they have obtained a knowledge; but a numerous class of complaints are founded upon totally erroneous notions held respecting the law itself. 'What a shocking thing it is,' we often hear people say, 'that so many prisoners escape justice from a flaw in the indictment!' Now, years ago, such a complaint as this would have been very just; multitudes of culprits did so evade justice; but at the present day such a remark is altogether uncalled for. There is hardly any error one can mention which, if it occur in an indictment, the judge cannot now amend at the time of trial. The prisoner may be charged by a wrong name; he may be indicted for committing the offence in one town when he really committed it in another; or a wrong date may be introduced—all does not matter; a stroke of the officer's pen, under the verbal direction of the judge, during the trial, will instantly set the matter right; and escape because of a defect in the drawing up of an indictment, the prisoner may look for in vain. This power of 'amending' has of late years, we may observe, been most beneficially applied to almost all legal documents; and at the present day, instead of defendants in civil suits escaping because the writ was erroneously framed, or plaintiffs being nonsuited owing to a defect in the declaration, writs, declarations, and pleas, may be cut about, added to, or subtracted from, just as convenience dictates.

Another remarkable error commonly indulged in, and put prominently forward at all times by those who advocate the inexpediency of capital punishments, is, that owing to the law imposing death for the commission of wilful murder, prisoners found guilty of capital offences, and executed, have frequently suffered unjustly, their innocence having been established after death. This belief is, we think, common to almost all with whom we have ever spoken on the subject; and the charge, if it could be substantiated, would form one of the most important objections against the existing law relating to murder. 'Better that ten guilty men should escape, than that one innocent man should suffer,' is a world-renowned maxim. But is the charge true? It has not been overlooked by those in authority, and it appears to us that the trouble a late Secretary of State took in obtaining an answer respecting it has been amply repaid in the confirmation of this fact—that after careful investigation by magistrate, coroner, grand and petty jury, judge, and Secretary of State, it is hardly *possible* that a crime can be attached to an innocent person and he suffer death. This question was put to each of the fifteen judges: 'Can you, assisted by your notes taken during trial, call to mind any cases of capital conviction in which the evidence did not clearly convince you of the guilt of the prisoner?' The answers given, in some cases referring to the experience of more than a quarter of a century, were uniform in agreeing that not *a single* unsatisfactory conviction had ever occurred before the judge whose opinion was solicited! So much for innocent people suffering death through the strictness of the law.

Another very common belief and complaint is, that courts are at all times fond of straining the law to its utmost extent against the facts of the case. The idea appears to be, that when a man 'goes to law,' he is led into a sort of trap, from which in time he may escape, but only with the loss of a great deal of his property, and with no ultimate advantage gained; and that, in the majority of instances, such a one finds that, owing to some former decision, some legal dicta, or previously unheard-of act of parliament, his cause has been decided in an altogether different manner from that which the facts warranted. This is one of the most erroneous beliefs common to a limited knowledge of the practice of the courts. True it is that proceedings at law are for the most part very expensive—though not nearly so costly as in times gone by—true also is it that a great deal of argumentation takes place very often upon the true construction of an act of parliament, or the real meaning of the parties as expressed in a written agreement, and so forth, in which there may occur a good deal of 'hair-splitting;' but in five cases out of six brought before the English courts of justice, the expense and difficulty are really caused by *disputed facts* on the original trial: one party swears positively to one thing; the opposite party swears just as positively to the contrary; and when the verdict is given, one party must be dissatisfied, and the more so as it feels that the jury have not believed its evidence. The loser therefore goes before 'the court above,' in order to try and get the verdict set aside, on the ground, that it is given 'against evidence;' and then the long contest as to what this witness said, and what that witness said, what the plaintiff himself swore to, and how much of it was disproved by the defendant, is mistaken very often by the spectators, and by those who subsequently read the newspaper account of the trial, for an argument carried on 'to know what the law is;' and remarks are pretty freely made about 'the glorious uncertainty of the law;' the speakers meanwhile forgetting, or perhaps never having been aware, that the argument was really caused by 'the glorious uncertainty of the facts.'

To confirm what we say on this matter, we may mention that there is scarcely a quicker way known of arriving at an ultimate decision in an action at law, than 'framing a special case,' as it is called; that is, getting the parties to agree upon the facts, and permitting the court to decide after applying the law to those facts. The law is, in the majority of cases, settled with great ease, while the real facts of the story are generally arrived at with the greatest difficulty.

A fruitful cause of litigation, although, perhaps, one would hardly suppose it to be so, arises from the fact that people have usually very erroneous notions respecting their own powers. If a man breaks into your house at midnight, you believe you may shoot him. You may do no such thing; and if you do, the law will perhaps try you for murder, and certainly for manslaughter. If thieves rob your orchard or garden, you imagine that, it being your own property, you may place 'man-traps and spring-guns on the premises.' You may do nothing of the kind at any time—not even in your own dwelling-house of a day—and if you do, the law can fine and imprison you. You buy at an auction an old cabinet which previously belonged to your friend Smith, and accidentally find a bag of money concealed therein; of course you think it your own, and appropriate it to your own use. Smith discovers what you have done—prosecutes you for it, and you get two years' imprisonment, with hard labour! Mary, your housemaid, robs you of five pounds—you find her out, and take her before a magistrate. She is remanded; you fancy that if she is tried, you will never see your money again, and tell her that if she hands it over to you, you will not press the charge against her. All this is done, and through your clemency Mary is discharged, and immediately returns your kindness by prosecuting you for misprision of felony! Now, in all these cases you may grumble as much as you please about the law, about its hardships and about its imperfections; but what you *ought* to grumble at, is your own erroneous idea of the power the law gives to you. It is precisely the same with the laws relating to property. We knew an old lady some years ago, who, under the will of her father, became possessed of two small landed estates. One of these she was directed to sell, and out of the proceeds of the sale she was to pay off a mortgage upon the second estate, and then convey the disencumbered estate to a third party, keeping for her own use any surplus money.

Now, all this was plain enough; but it so happened that the good lady had a particular affection for the estate she was directed to sell, for upon it was a house in which she had been born. She therefore did what many of us might have done under similar circumstances; she did *not* sell the first estate, but paid off the mortgage out of her own pocket, and conveyed what she was ordered to convey to the proper person. By and by, the old lady made her own will, and among other things bequeathed the estate, which she considered undoubtedly her own, to her daughter. On her death, the daughter was at once ousted of her legacy by the heir-at-law, on the ground that the old lady had *no power* to devise the estate, it having been given to her only in trust to do a particular thing with it, which she had omitted to do. Now, that unfortunate daughter we know; she has grumbled ever since her mother's death, seventeen years ago, and she will descend grumbling to the grave. Grumbling against what? Against her silly old mother, for leaving her what was not hers to leave? Against the heir-at-law, for taking what he was perhaps scarcely justified in laying claim to? Or against her grandmother, for making a somewhat awkward disposition of her estate? She has not, in our hearing, ever uttered one word of complaint against any or either of these. Her burden is, she has 'been ruined by law.'

We have already mentioned the common and erroneous belief as to being 'snapped up' on points of law; a kindred error is, that the law is ever watchful to take advantage of any illegal act committed by you. The criminal law is, of course, necessarily watchful, if it be only for the public protection. A large body of officers, whose duty it is jealously to guard against any infraction of the Queen's peace—a very wide phrase—keep their eyes steadily fixed on the community at large; but where are any officials employed to commence proceedings for private wrongs? No such officers exist; and the idea of the law being ever on the watch to inflict condign punishment upon you for peccadilloes committed through ignorance or carelessness, of which no private individual can take advantage, is simply an absurdity. Where, indeed, a person has been guilty of gross carelessness, of which another can, and does, take advantage by legal process, as might be expected, the careless person is the sufferer, but not otherwise.

Thus, you insure your life, and in answer to one of the questions submitted to you, upon the truth or falsehood of which your policy, as you are plainly informed, depends, you say that your last medical attendant was Mr Brown, surgeon, London, who attended you for gout, two years ago; forgetting, it may be, that eighteen months since you called in Mr Smith, who attended you a couple of days for diarrhœa. By and by, you die, and your poor widow has to commence an action for the amount of your policy, and is eventually deprived of all benefit from it by reason of your erroneous statement.

Or—to take a more frequently occurring case, you insure your house against fire, and your policy states that there are 'no hot-air flues, or stoves, other than ordinary grates, on the premises;' whereas this is a mistake, for you have one or two Arnott's stoves about the house. You never read over the policy sent to you, but consign it to your strong box, as you would a promissory-note or the will of a friend. Your house is burned down; you apply for your L.500 or L.1000; something turns up about the Arnott's stoves, and the law tells you that you cannot recover a farthing! A shamefully hard law say you, and ought to be altered. Look at the case, however, with an unprejudicial eye. A public company say—'If you will truly answer one or two questions, and pay us a certain yearly sum of money, we will take a certain risk upon us.' What *you* would have the law to say to the company is: 'You shall still take this risk upon you, which has now become a certainty, though the questions are *untruly* answered.'

We always like to ask one who complains long and loudly of the existing law, what he suggests should be done respecting it. 'Codify it.' By so doing you render it still less elastic, and still less capable of deciding in anything like an equitable manner the various cases coming under its cognizance. 'Permit its expounders to alter it so as to suit the requirements of each case upon which it would otherwise press too heavily.' Which would be to allow the mind of the judge to take the place of the statute-book, and conflicting decisions would be as plentiful as blackberries. 'Improve it.' To carefully weed out from it all that is obsolete and useless, and to render what is retained plain and uncontradictory, is the only wise and proper course; and when we remember that, within the last ten years, 'special pleading,' with all its useless ramifications, three-fourths of the technicalities of the criminal law, John Doe, Richard Roe, and all that was incomprehensible in ejectment, have, together with much other cumbersome machinery, been abolished, we do not think that the improvers of the law have been altogether idle.

No, good reader; you may talk as you will about the inherent badness and imperfect working of the law of England, and may stigmatise, as it has long been the fashion to do, the administrators of that law, as being the originators of legal subtilties and unmeaning jargon; but a careful and candid consideration will, we feel assured, convince you, however disagreeable the conviction may be, that some, at all events, of your dissatisfaction is owing to your own imperfect knowledge of the composition and practice of the law.

MY SCIENTIFIC MISFORTUNES.

THAT I have the melancholy pleasure of addressing the British public from a foreign prison, and while under sentence of death, is no fault of mine, but my misfortune. Those circumstances may, perhaps, invest my narrative with an interest not otherwise belonging to it, and are so far gratifying to me; but before it meets English eyes, I shall probably have been placed upon an American gallows, high above the praise or blame of my fellow-countrymen. I doubt, indeed, whether a writer ever contributed to this or any other journal with less anxiety as to what readers might think of his contribution. They have my fullest consent either to read it, or, in the eloquent language of my adopted country, to 'let the darn'd thing be.' As for the verdict of Posterity, one month ago I would have preferred the favourable verdict of certain twelve citizens of the United States to that of all the generations of men that will ever be born, and I care even less about Posterity now than I did at that time. The editor may do just what he likes with my contribution, even to the transatlantic extent of appropriating it as his own; and even whether the Proprietors pay for it or not, is to me a matter equally devoid of interest. All I beg of them is, that they will, at all events, pay nothing to Bartholomew Sharp—or Bat Sharp, as he is called, though certainly not on account of any blindness to his *own* security—who has most likely, by the time this goes to press, appointed himself my sole executor. When I said that I was under sentence of death through my misfortune, I meant, through Bartholomew Sharp, who has been my bane through life, from the period when I pursued my scientific studies in my native Aberdeenshire, to this present, when I have reached, indeed, the summit of my profession as a practical chemist, but am about myself to be 'suspended' in American air.

'Who has not seen Ballybareleg has seen nothing,' is a well-known local proverb, alluding to the superiority of that Highland village; and certainly, who has not seen it may with truth be said to have seen nothing like it. The valley is a *cul de sac*, with impassable mountains at its head, and at its foot, more mountains of an extremely similar character. It looks as if Nature had tried 'her 'prentice hand' at a World in that locality, and not succeeding to her satisfaction, had afterwards endeavoured to conceal the evidences of her failure. To call it 'a place of retirement,' would be to suggest means of frantic dissipation of which it is entirely destitute. It is a place for burying one's-self alive in, and that is all. Thither I retired, therefore, to conduct certain experiments which, though of great eventual benefit to the community, are sometimes held by it, meanwhile, to be a considerable public inconvenience. I shall never forget the noise, for instance, there was made in the Granite City about a very interesting animal called the Quagga, whose remains I had suffered to continue—or, as some wags observed, to *dis*continue—in my cellar for a longer time, perhaps, than the heat of the season warranted; but that was before I got Bat Sharp for my assistant, and therefore is excluded from these my final memorials. Bat was an astute lad, even for an Aberdeen boy, who had taken a fancy to practical science and to me, and I encouraged him in both his predilections. We agreed together that it would be better to remove with some live stock, upon which we proposed to operate, to Ballybareleg, than incur afresh such odium as had been created against us by the Quagga, and we flitted accordingly. There was, properly speaking, no road to our new residence, but our animals and ourselves were 'lifted' over the passes, and deposited safely at our journey's end by the muscular inhabitants of the district.

We kept ourselves *to* ourselves of necessity, since we could not speak a word of Gaelic; and perhaps it was this isolation which, in conjunction with the hideous noises heard to issue from our operating-rooms—which were sometimes the byres, and sometimes the cellars—caused us to be looked upon with a suspicion, which ripened very shortly into positive hatred. I do not think the inhabitants approved of our wearing trousers, since, when we walked abroad, they would point to them, and make signs that we should dispense with such insolent assumptions of superiority; but this was a minor cause of offence, which we would have removed at whatever inconvenience, had we imagined that by doing so confidence could have been restored. I confess to feeling exceedingly uncomfortable at the unpleasant sensation we were making in a place which we had fondly hoped would have been incapable of any public feeling: it would have been better, I thought more than once, to have been indicted for a nuisance at Aberdeen, than to run the risk of being 'harried' at Ballybareleg—whatever that dreadful term might signify—by persons unacquainted with any processes of law whatever: but Bat Sharp, who had made himself exceedingly useful to me in many ways, was always saying that there was nothing to fear. Photography was Bat's delight; and it was the belief of the village community that he had obtained (at the usual sacrifice) a mastery over the Father of Evil, and kept him in a mahogany box upon three legs, wherein he took dark views of the neighbourhood. There was one gilly of enormous proportions, whose fear of this machine was ludicrous in such a very high degree, that Bartholomew was resolved to get his likeness into his collection. Taking advantage, therefore, of the hairy-limbed red man as he fished one day in Ballybareleg burn, he not only obtained a most excellent photograph of him from the bridge, but must needs exhibit it to him in triumph afterwards. Sandy Maclean cast but one horrified glance at that deil's looking-glass, as he termed it, and with a yell which would have put to shame a Pawnee upon the war-trail, took to his heels and raised the village. The whole population bore down upon our scientific *dépôt*, as the Gauls did in a previous epoch on the senators of ancient Rome, and we received them with the like appearance of equanimity. We asserted, with many solemn protestations, our entire innocence—that we had never taken Sandy's portrait at all—and instanced the empty camera as a proof of the hallucination of the infuriated Gael. The minister, too, who acted as interpreter, stood by us, and by attributing Maclean's excitement to the influence of whisky, obtained for us, for that time, a verdict of 'Not proven.' Maclean, however, was thereby for ever rendered our irreconcilable foe.

On the ensuing Sabbath, a circumstance occurred which rendered our longer residence in Ballybareleg quite out of the question. As the congregation was issuing from the sacred edifice in the afternoon, an infuriated sow, with a red night-cap drawn down, visor-like, beneath her eyes, and accompanied by thirteen of her progeny similarly accoutred, charged through their very midst with complete success. The minister in vain attempted to open a passage for the larger animal between his legs, and was made to bite the dust before his flock. The scarlet-crested animals so snapped at the naked calves of the Highlandmen, that they might have been taken for a congregation of Jumpers from Wales.* This insult to the community was not long in being traced home to its originators. Bartholomew Sharp and myself were given to understand that, so soon as the midnight hour should elapse, and the Sabbath be ended, we should be sacrificed, as was sarcastically observed by the malicious Sandy, 'body and breeches.' And yet no two more innocent persons were then breathing in the whole county of Aberdeen. In the cause of science, we had merely obtained possession of certain animals, and subjected them to a surgical process for the benefit of science, after which they had been provided with cheap and comfortable head-dresses of red cotton. The operations had in every case been very beautiful; but a certain feeling of irritation still lurked in the proverbially obstinate minds of the patients, and they had given expression to it—on the occasion of Bat's opening the byre-door and inadvertently leaving it so—in the manner described. There was, however, no time to be lost in vain regrets or remonstrances, and we departed upon the instant over the impracticable mountain tops. We were pursued at the appointed hour by the vengeful Maclean and his myrmidons, and owed our lives solely to the circumstance that we journeyed in an entirely wrong direction, and reached the world at a point equally unsuspected by the inhabitants of Ballybareleg and ourselves.

The second misfortune which overtook me in the pursuit of science was in a very different locality. but the immediate cause of the calamity was, as before—as always—Bartholomew Sharp. He had been so very good as to accompany me as my permanent assistant to the West Indies, where I had received a government appointment, and soon earned for myself, by assiduous experiments in practical chemistry, the terror and hatred of the entire black population. To convince them of my innocence as a practiser of magic arts, was useless; so I had taken the other line, and declared myself Fetish, given out that I was invulnerable, and threatened, in case of suffering the least inconvenience at their hands, to sink the whole island in the Caribbean Sea.

One night I was sitting alone, and engaged in study; a large Argand lamp, like a very good deed in a very naughty world, threw its rays through the open jalousies, and illuminated my whole apartment like a full moon. A sudden crackling of the light garden-fence reminded me of the danger I ran in making myself so conspicuous, and sent me under the table in an instant, with my hand upon a loaded revolver, to which I trusted as a last argument wherewith to convince the unscientific native skull. My heart went pit-a-pat as I heard a naked body brush the sides of the veranda; he was drawing himself along, serpent-fashion, so as not to rise above the low ledge of the window-sill. I listened, as may be imagined, with considerable attention, and found that I had but one assassin to contend with; then I felt confident enough, for I had half-a-dozen men's lives in the weapon which I then held in my hand. Still, there was, of course, the chance of the fellow's shooting me first—an achievement which I had to anticipate—so that the adventure was by no means devoid of excitement. Silence reigned for so long, that I had almost begun to think myself the victim of a foolish fancy, when I caught sight of a dark head rising slowly between the jalousies; a couple of savage eyes glared into the chamber, though not without an expression of superstitious awe, and aiming as nearly between them as I could judge, I fired. I missed. With a cry of terror, the black villain took to his heels, and I myself leaped through the unglazed casement like a harlequin, and pursued him on the wings of vengeance.

Beautiful as West Indian nights are described to be, I confess I was never less penetrated with the glories of natural scenery than upon this particular occasion. I had no eyes for the liquid beauty of the starry heavens, nor for those earthly stars, the fire-flies, which flitted across my path so brilliantly; while as for the boasted 'tropical luxuriance of vegetation,' I execrated each climber and creeper which trammelled my flying feet. In the unreflecting eagerness of the moment, seeing him leap from one cover to another, I fired, and he dropped. No sooner had I done so, than, like almost all bloodshedders, I felt sorry for it, and hastened to learn how I could soothe his dying moments. The poor fellow evinced at first the most abject terror at my approach; but presently, being reassured by my attentions, and made wiser, perhaps, by the approach of death, he confessed that he was sorry for having attempted to murder me, since it seemed possible that I was no conjuror after all. A gang of some sixty-five of them had drawn lots, he told me, for the honour of putting me out of the world; and now that he, the first to whom that duty fell, had failed, it would be necessary for the remainder to draw again, and so on—for sixty-three times—until either the club or myself was abolished. Having imparted to me this agreeable news, the poor black expired with the air of a man who has said all that he has to say; and I hastened home, to find Bartholomew in a dreadful state of mind about my absence and the explosion of the revolver. We returned together, and buried the corpse where it fell, concluding that it would be advisable that the sixty-four should remain in ignorance of their comrade's fate, and defer their next ballot as long as possible.

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* Most northern readers whose recollections extend beyond the last twenty years, will witness to the truth of this incident, however they may be puzzled by the locality now assigned to it.

'Bat Sharp,' said I, as we were taking our breakfast the next morning, 'I know how we could settle an old controversy about the brain just now, if we chose; but I suppose it wouldn't do.'

'If you mean the Darkie,' returned Bartholomew, 'I don't see why it shouldn't do; except that, judging from his expectations of that old horse-pistol killing you with a silver bullet, I should doubt his having any brain at all. Why shouldn't it do?'

'Well,' replied I, 'if it was to be found out, we should, beyond all question, be massacred; and even if not, I don't think I could go and possess myself of that poor fellow's head in cold blood.'

'Very well,' returned Bat, in a cool exacerbating tone which is peculiar to him; 'in that case, there is, of course, nothing to be said; these questions of feeling are so delicate; or else one *would* have thought that after having'——

'Bartholomew,' interrupted I, with dignity, 'hold your tongue;' and he held it.

Nevertheless, I did feel a very great craving after the brain of my recent antagonist; my assistant and myself were deeply engaged in photographic experiments connected with the interior organisation of the human head, and subjects just then were not only scarce, but unattainable. In a long, lonely walk I took that very evening, I argued the case both *Pro* and *Con.* with eloquent impartiality, and at last came to a decision in favour of my right to the Head in question. It was, I reasoned, a natural right—and therein superior to any mere legal claim—inasmuch as many savage tribes have a practice of carrying off the heads of their slain enemies, without making any bones of the matter at all. Nature was often a more reliable guide in cases of conscience than Civilisation herself. The matter being thus, as it were, in equipoise, I cast in the claims of Science, and returned home to get me a spade. I was determined, through shame at what had happened in the morning, to make no confidant of Bartholomew in the affair, but to conduct it alone; consequently, I groped my way through the darkness into my study, by way of the window, and felt about for a match wherewith to light the lamp. As I swept my hand over the table after the lucifers, it came against a woolly substance, which almost froze me with terror. Even when I recovered from the shock, its effects were so powerful that I determined to set them down in my note-book as evidences of the strength of morbid imagination. At last I struck a match, and lit the Argand. Never, I trust—it will not certainly be when this my brief imprisonment is ended, and I am led out, an innocent man, to be suspended in the face of day—never shall I experience so hideous a sensation as took possession of my soul at the sight that lamp disclosed! Upon my own table, on an enormous china dish, reposed that very head which I was about to seek in its tomb! Was it only a hideous phantasm? A written paper was lying near it, containing the words: 'Here is a present which I know you will in your heart be glad to get; a fruit which will please you, although you did not like to pluck it yourself. Yours always, Bartholomew Sharp.' The revulsion produced by this explanation was too strong for my overwrought nerves, and I fainted right away. The disturbance so created aroused not only the author of this catastrophe, but all the black domestics, upon whom the head of their departed brother produced a sensation such as is only possible among niggers. It is enough to say, that in a very few days we two sons of science were glad enough to see the leagues of ocean lengthen between us and the excitable inhabitants of the tropics, and to find ourselves established at New York.

'There, at least,' thought I, 'in the very centre of the highly forced civilisation of the New World, our investigations into the economy of the human head will run no chance of disturbance from ignorant fanaticism; there, in the sheltering bosom of the large-eyed Eagle of the West, we may laugh to scorn the bald-headed bird of Preju*dyce;* there, beneath the star-bespangled ægis of the Minerva of Liberty' —— in fact, I felt as though I were a native of the United States myself, and could have gone on for hours in that peculiar style of eulogistic eloquence which may well be termed the Yankee's Own. And certainly, in sober seriousness, did ever a country offer greater opportunities to the man of practical science than she? Setting aside her considerable slave population—affording, like some magnificent open-air hospital, a quite unprecedented variety of examples of ill-usage and disease—and speaking only of her native and independent citizens, consider the interesting and novel cases which revolvers, life-preservers, bowie-knives, and even the simple but ingenious agency of the human thumb, are perpetually presenting to the student of physical science. To a surgeon, of course, such a nation is Golconda; but even to such as our two selves, it spontaneously afforded, in its continually occurring 'difficulties,' a range of practical study, which it is complained that in our own country even the efforts of government itself have failed to command. The human head was not, indeed, to be had for the asking, but the human eye was to be picked up in every other street; of that opportunity, therefore, we took the fullest possible advantage, and with the following most extraordinary result.

I here solemnly place it upon record, in what is probably my last paper upon this or any other subject, that I was the first person who discovered the astounding fact that, by photographing the retina of the human eye immediately after death, or elimination—as the case may be—*the last image presented to it when fulfilling its visual function can be obtained!* The thing has already made no little noise in Europe, but, from their poverty of experimental material, it is probable that the old countries will be long before they fully recognise the value of the discovery. Be that as it may, I have unveiled a great natural mystery; I have performed the mighty scientific task which it was my favoured lot to be the first to undertake; and now, like other great benefactors, I am about to expiate my virtues with my life. In a few days from this period, in consequence of my too great success in scientific discovery, I shall be hung.

The results of our experiments had been long known only to Bartholomew and myself, but we were now determined to take others into our confidence. It was arranged between ourselves and three of the first surgeons in New York, that the very next case of assassination which should occur in the city should receive elucidation at my hands. It is needless to say that we had no very long time to wait. I myself, passing down one of the principal streets one morning, was the first to come upon an unfortunate citizen in the act of being prostrated by a blow from a life-preserver. I did not see the assassin's face, for he, catching sight of me, I suppose, coming up with a certain gigantic crab-stick in my hand which I always carry, had at once taken to his heels and fled. I was too late, however, to save the life of the unhappy victim, and he was borne, as had been arranged beforehand, to my own apartments. The surgeons were summoned, and Bartholomew Sharp took charge of the process of photographing the retina. While this was going on, one of the savans began, after the manner of his nation, to improve the occasion by enlarging on the important character of the new discovery, which he, characteristically enough, described as a new proof of American superiority. 'Here alone,' said he—'here alone on the universal airth has it been permitted to science to cause the murderer to be pointed out even from the tomb. Death itself will henceforth have a voice in this gifted hemisphere, and be no longer dumb. The form and face of him who struck the fatal blow—only beheld, as he thought, by his victim's dying eyes—will now be made patent to all the world. By the help of photography, my countrymen, an evidence will be produced which no subtlety of man can set aside; a witness not to be suborned, not to be bribed, not to be deceived, not to be'—— It is impossible to say how long the learned professor might have kept these pleonasms up, had not a shriek from Bartholomew Sharp arrested him, and attracted us to the machine to mark the result that had been arrived at. Alas, that bane of my existence held in his unlucky hand a very accurate photographic resemblance of the writer of this paper as he ran up the street, bludgeon in hand, to the assistance of the wounded man! The last image which had been presented to his retina had been that of myself and my stick! The evidence which no subtlety of man could set aside therefore pointed to *me* as the murderer of that unhappy man. Bartholomew Sharp was already regarding my bit of crab-tree with that sort of morbid interest which one feels in the razors kept in museums which have been previously used by Mr Greenacre and others, to put an end to their victims. It was just such a blunt instrument, he seemed to think, as that by which the fatal blow must have been given. One of the professors leaned out of the window and beckoned a policeman.

'Gracious goodness,' cried I, 'you don't suppose *I* did it?'

'That is a matter for a jury of my intelligent fellow-countrymen to decide,' replied he, with a dreadful increase of nasal twang. 'I guess you did; I calkilate you wanted a body, stranger, and you couldn't wait for your legitimate opportunities.'

Stonejug Prison, New York, U. S.

VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY.

It is not necessary, on the present occasion, to debate the question whether Britain is in danger of invasion, or whether, even if there be no immediate danger, it is well that the country should be better provided than she is against an attack at all times possible. Enough that there is a pretty general opinion, that Britain ought to improve her means of defence, and that steps are being taken for working out this object. Amongst these is the formation of volunteer artillery corps connected with various districts and localities—a project to which the ministry, moreover, has lent some degree of countenance. Viewing these facts, it seems to us that we shall be in the line of our duty as public instructors, if we give some brief account of this branch of warfare, and what is required to make its efficiency complete. Persons inclined to form corps of artillery will thus be made aware of what is required of them to realise their wishes, and the public at large will be enabled to judge whether artillery worked by volunteers is likely to be of much use.

Artillery is usually divided into two parts, called siege or garrison artillery, and field-artillery. The first is for the defence of towns or coasts, and is considered to be stationary; the guns are 'in position,' as it is termed, and are placed so as to command roads, entrances to harbours, anchorages, &c. The guns for this purpose are usually large and heavy; they consist of 32-pounders, 8-inch guns, 68-pounders, and—very shortly, it is hoped—of Armstrong's guns. All guns (so called) are capable of throwing solid shot, shells filled either with powder, or with leaden bullets, or grape-shot, and canister.

In heavy guns, the proportion of the weight of the gun to that of the shot is about 2 cwt. to 1 lb. Thus, a 32-pounder gun would weigh about 64 cwt.; in medium guns, this proportion is about 1⅓ cwt. to 1 lb. The charge of powder for heavy guns is about ⅓ of the weight of the shot; thus, for a 32-pounder, the charge would be about 10¾ lb. The charge for light guns is about ¼ the weight of the shot; a 12-pounder would therefore require about 3 lb. of powder.

The various parts of a gun, are, first, the muzzle; which extends about a foot to where there are two or three rings around the gun. From these rings to the next is called 'the chase;' just beyond the chase is 'the second reinforce;' on each side of which are the trunnions, upon which the gun rests in its carriage. The trunnions are so placed as to be nearly in the balance of the gun, a slight preponderance of weight coming upon the breech. Beyond the second reinforce is the first reinforce, which extends to the breech; the vent passes through the first reinforce into the bore of the piece; there is then the loop, and the fillet at the extremity of the piece. The size of the bore of a gun is called 'the caliber.'

In the English service, the larger guns, such as 24, 32, 56, and 68 pounders, are made of iron; lighter guns, such as 3, 6, 9 and 12 pounders, are made of brass. Howitzers are shorter and lighter than guns, and are not fitted to throw solid shot; they are used for shells only; and by means of greater elevation and reduced charges, the shell is made to hop along the ground, or to burst, which is found to be very destructive to troops advancing in open column. Large iron howitzers, with a caliber of 8 and 10 inches, are used for garrison-artillery; whilst 12, 24, and 32 pounder bores are used for field-artillery.

In addition to guns and howitzers, there are also carronades and mortars, which may have to be used by volunteer artillerymen. Carronades are shorter and lighter in proportion to their caliber than guns; they have no trunnions, but the piece is attached to its carriage by means of a loop underneath. They were originally intended for the armament of ships, or where there is not much space; but their range is very short, and they are, consequently, in the present day but little used. Mortars differ from guns in being much shorter and thicker, and in having the trunnions at the breech. They are distinguished by the diameters of their bore, the largest at present in use being 13 inches in diameter, the smallest, 4⅖ inches. Mortars are used solely to throw shells or hand-grenades; they are always fired at an angle of 45°, and thus the range is increased or decreased by adding or subtracting powder. The shell ascends to a considerable height, and falls upon the object aimed at, and acts either as a mine, by sinking into the ground and then bursting, or as a destructive missile, by bursting just over a town, or body of troops.

These being the principal weapons in use, we will now speak of the training of the men who are to use them.

A gun-detachment, as it is called, may consist of eight or more men; each man has his respective duties to perform, and should pay attention to nothing but his own duties. Each man is numbered, and obeys any word of command which refers either to him individually or to the detachment collectively. The duties are with nearly all guns much as follow: No. 1 commands the detachment, gives the words of command to load, fire, &c.; lays the gun—that is, aims with it—and superintends the whole movements. His position is just in rear of the breech of the gun. No. 2 stands upon the right-hand side of the gun, facing the front, and in line with the muzzle. He is provided with a rammer, on one end of which is a sheep-skin sponge, and if the gun be a small one, a rammer-head is on the other end; if the gun be a large one, there will be two—one for the sponge, one for the rammer-head. When the direction is given to load, No. 2 places the sponge in the bore of the gun, pushes the sponge up, turns it round once or twice, and then brings it smartly out. The bring-out is called 'springing' the sponge. The 'sponging' is for the purpose of clearing out the bore of the gun, also to extinguish any smouldering pieces of the former cartridge which might still remain by chance in the bore. This proceeding requires to be well and carefully performed, for if any small pieces of cartridge did remain in the bore, the insertion of a fresh cartridge would be fraught with danger, for the explosion might carry away the arms and sponge of No. 2; and thus the gun would for a time be disabled, in consequence of the loss of the sponge. As soon as the gun has been sponged, No. 2 rams home a cartridge, a wad, and a shot, and immediately resumes his place on the right of the gun.

No. 3 stands upon the left-hand side of the gun, in line with the muzzle. His duty is to take from No. 6 the cartridge, wad, and shot; and when No. 2 has sponged the gun, he places these in the gun in order; taking care that, in the hurry and excitement attending this new occupation, he does not place the shot in the muzzle before the powder, a mistake which has happened with recruits more than once in our experience.

No. 4 stands behind No. 2; and his duty is to cover the vent of the gun with his thumb during the sponging.

No. 5, who stands behind No. 3, fires the gun when the loading and laying are completed.

No. 6 stands behind No. 1, and when directions are given to load, he runs to the rear, and procures ammunition from 7 and 8, who prepare the shells, &c. for use.

All these various duties must be learned practically, and the volunteer must be capable of acting at once, and in any capacity, immediately a word of command is given. It must be borne in mind that in all training there is but one object in view—namely, to fit one's-self for the work to be performed. Thus, the object of the volunteer artilleryman should be to qualify himself to hit an object at a long distance; to load and fire as quickly as possible, and with as great safety as possible; to be able to set to rights any little damage which his gun might sustain; and to watch when, where, and how his fire would be the most effective. These are really the objects to which attention should be paid, and not to the minor details as to how the feet and shoulders should be placed during this or that operation, or how the back of this hand or the thumb of that should be held. Too much attention is frequently paid to such minor matters, and none at all to the really practical. We want serviceable artillerymen, not show artillerymen. To lay a gun quickly and truly is in itself a science, and requires some practice; but intelligence will often supply the place of practice; and it is not unusual to find an intelligent novice excelling an old trained soldier.

The gun is laid by means of a notch in the muzzle, and another on the base ring; or by means of a sight called the 'dispart sight,' placed upon the centre of the gun. These two being brought into line with the object by moving the gun-carriage with handspikes, the direction is first obtained. According to the distance of the object, so it is necessary to give elevation to the gun; and a small brass scale, called the 'tangent scale,' is fitted on to the end of the gun, and slides up and down. This scale is graduated to degrees and ¼ of degrees, and the range or first graze of the shot is increased so many yards for each ¼ of a degree, according to the nature of the gun. Under the breech of the gun there is usually a screw, by elevating or depressing which the breech is elevated or depressed, and consequently, the muzzle depressed or elevated. In some guns, instead of the screw, there is a wedge, called the 'coin,' by which the breech is raised or lowered.

Too much practice in laying the gun cannot be had, for upon this the whole efficiency of artillery depends. It is of no use making a noise and merely firing off guns; such a proceeding, if unaccompanied by accuracy of aim, would merely give to an enemy additional confidence. It is the fatal accuracy of aim which is so destructive, and which causes one well-manned gun to be more than a match for three badly manned. To lay a gun well, the artilleryman should keep his eye about 2 feet from the tangent scale, and endeavour to get his line at once—to catch it, as it were—giving his directions clearly and sharply to the handspike men who are moving the breech. His words of command would be for heavy guns, 'Muzzle right,' or 'Muzzle left,' at which words the breech should be moved to the 'left' or to the 'right.' When the true line is obtained, the word 'Halt' stops all movements. At the word 'Elevate,' the handspikes should be placed under the breech of the gun, and then the gun is raised or depressed as required.

The whole of the words of command to a trained detachment would be 'Load,' 'Fire;' all the details may be accomplished without any other words. Artillery is employed in the field to 'cover,' as it is called, the movements of troops, their advances or retreats; to harass an enemy; and to defend the keys of any important position. Artillery never acts alone, but it should always be combined with a force of either infantry or cavalry. It prepares the way for the successful use of both these forces, and paralyses the offensive movements of the enemy. The best position in which to place artillery, is so that the guns may be able to fire obliquely or in flank upon troops. A gently falling slope is the best position for guns to fire from, and they should be placed just beyond the ridge, so that their muzzles alone would appear above the ridge.

It is not usual for artillery to fire upon artillery, unless a battery makes itself very destructive, but the fire should be directed upon the masses of infantry and cavalry.

Great care should be taken that ammunition is never wasted; thus, it is not advisable to fire upon men who are scattered about, except shells containing bullets be used.

The shells are burst by means of fuses, which are fitted into the shell. All fuses burn an inch in five seconds of time, and according to the distance of the object aimed at, so would a fuse be cut shorter or longer.

It is usual for a gunner to have a card, on which are tables of the elevation and length of fuse required for various distances for the gun which he is using.

The principal requisites, therefore, for a volunteer artilleryman are—quick sight; a good judgment of distance; a determination to stand to his guns; a knowledge of how to load and aim a cannon; and a belief that he will not be a more useless member of society in consequence of knowing these things; but that, on the contrary, he will have an additional value in being one of some 10,000 others who could knock over an invader at the distance of 2000 yards, if the occasion required such a performance.

THE GUILTY THOUGHT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.

A MONTH or more had passed away since the memorable evening with which our story began. Good Mrs Roper had long returned home, little dreaming of the influence her short visit had exerted over the family at the Hall. There had been many other imprudent walks and lingerings in the heavy dew of the midsummer night since the one at which we have seen her shake her kind old head; all the more imprudent, too, because the season was peculiarly sultry and unhealthy, as several cases of fever in the district testified. Yet Mrs Vivyan seldom remonstrated. Never, not even in the days of her early widowhood, had she felt so completely wretched. To her energetic nature, there was something peculiarly trying in a danger that she saw advancing steadily and stealthily, but which she could in no way obviate, nay, could only accelerate by a counter-movement. To discuss the matter with her son would but serve to define in his mind feelings perhaps vague at present; to send Matilda away would rouse in him an opposition that she had never yet provoked, and the strength of which she could hardly calculate. A chilling barrier seemed rising inevitably between her and her boy. For the first time, he had an interest he did not ask her to share; and worse than all, she saw that the artful girl would ere long succeed in alienating not only his confidence but his affections. Often during sleepless nights she would come to the conclusion that anything were better than this growing habit of reserve on Arthur's part. When morning came, she would take her boy's curly head in her hands, as in his childhood, and force herself to smile, while telling him she had guessed his secret; she would treat it as the mere trifling fancy it was; she would lead him to speak of it openly, and then—there should be no violent opposition on her part; but Arthur loved his mother, he would not slight her opinion, calmly, dispassionately expressed—he would not sacrifice her life to this sudden and unaccountable admiration. He would travel; he would see others fairer, higher, worthier. Oh, she was not worldly in her aspirations for her boy! Well-born, as she rejoiced he on both sides was, descended from a long line of men of cultivated and chivalrous honour; yet she could take to her heart some beautiful and innocent peasant-girl, if her Arthur chose her, so only that she were pure and simple, true and loving in nature. In the morning, she would tell him this, and their hearts would be open to each other once more. Morning came, and again it seemed impossible to touch upon the hateful subject. Some glance or tone of tenderness on Arthur's part would scare back the words Mrs Vivyan had been planning. He too surely loved that girl to make reasoning with him now of any avail; she must trust to circumstance, and to the variable fancy of early youth. So days and nights passed away in miserable indecision. Meanwhile, August had set in, and the time for Matilda's return to school was drawing near. Arthur, too, received a pressing invitation from his college friend, Harness, to join him in Ross-shire on the 12th. The young man, like his father, was a capital shot. He was sorry, though, to lose two or three days of Mattie's presence. She was to travel up to Hampstead on the 13th; he must depart on the 9th, if he was to reach old Harness's moor in time. There were two beating hearts at the breakfast-table the morning that he discussed his friend's letter. Mrs Vivyan dared not urge his going, she wished it too intensely. Mattie dared not deprecate it. Left thus to himself, the sportsman prevailed over the lover. But perhaps the mother drew from this too favourable an augury, and the young girl was too much depressed by it. What, after all, he was saying to himself, were these two or three days? He was so sure of her heart, there was none of the excitement of suspense on that score. At Christmas they should meet again—she was coming home 'for good,' then. Ah! if Mrs Vivyan, if Matilda could have seen the workings of the young man's mind as he sat and pondered over and about that letter, how the hope of the one would have been quenched, the anxiety of the other lightened!

There was a long ramble the evening before Arthur's departure. His mother sat and waited with death in her heart. Matilda returned with cheeks deeply flushed, and shining eyes—with something of elation, of triumph, too, in her manner, Mrs Vivyan thought. O God! she *hated* that girl. What cunning, underhand motive was this now, that led her, before the evening was over, to pretend a headache, and retire early? Arthur had his own interpretation. The kind little heart was heavy, he thought—longed to be alone; and there would be time for leave-taking in the morning. Left with his mother, he moved the lamp to the next room, and prepared, as he said, for a long cozy chat in the twilight. Throwing himself down on the floor at full length, he rested his head against her knee; she bent over him, silent through unutterable love. Her boy, her own beautiful boy! She twisted his dark curls round her fingers; she looked into his deep gray eyes—how like his father's they were! That old agony revived. A tear or two fell heavily on her son's face. He started—he had never seen her weep. 'Why, mother, you are not low, surely, because I am leaving you for a month or so? You are not well,' he went on tenderly; 'you have been looking pale for some time back, and out of spirits, too. Mother,' said the young man with a sudden effort, 'I want to speak to you a little about Mattie.'

Mrs Vivyan's heart beat wildly, but her tears were at once dried. 'What of Mattie?' she said in a tone she tried hard to render indifferent.

'I wish you liked her better; I wish you thought better of her.'

'Arthur, have I ever failed in kindness towards her? Had she been a relation of my own, or of your father's, instead of what she is, could I have been more anxious to give her every advantage of education? My boy, are you not a little unreasonable?'

'No, mother, I am not. I own that you have been noble and generous; *that* you would always be; but you do not love her, and she feels it deeply.'

'She has sought to estrange you from me by pretending to a regret she does *not* feel. Matilda wants only material benefits from me, Arthur; she is most philosophically indifferent, believe me, to that impalpable, impossible gift of love.'

The words were no sooner spoken than Mrs Vivyan regretted them. She had betrayed what she sought to hide. She had spoken bitterly. This was not the dispassionate tone by which she had meant to lead her son to observe for himself the character now under discussion.

Arthur jumped up hastily. 'Well, mother, it's no use, I see; whatever I say makes matters worse. You have an unaccountable prejudice against this poor girl; but you'll try to overcome it, if—if—— Nay, you need not start, mother; it's absurd, you know, at my age, only I don't think I'm of a very variable nature. Well, well, mother, we'll not talk of it again for three years at least. You look ready to faint; but if I ask it of you then, you'll overcome your prejudices for your son's sake!' And having said this in rather an unsteady, husky voice, the young man kissed his mother with his old boyish fervour, and left the room without waiting a reply.

The next morning, Arthur was down early. There was a copy of Tennyson to be given to Mattie; there were last words. She was sure to be strolling on the terrace before breakfast. No; she was not there; and, odd enough, her blind was still down. His mother was making the tea as he re-entered the dining-room. 'Matilda has a headache this morning,' she said, before he could even inquire the reason of her non-appearance. 'My maid came to tell me this. I have seen her. You have been a good deal out late in the evenings, and she has probably taken cold. During the spring, her schoolmistress wrote me word, she was very subject to slight attacks of the kind. I advised her to remain in bed for breakfast.'

'My mother did not wish us to meet again,' thought the young man, stirring his tea in rather ungenial mood. 'Mattie has been crying herself into a headache, I daresay. I half wish I had not promised to go to old Harness after all.' In a few moments the dog-cart was at the door, and Arthur, taking a rapid leave of his mother, said: 'You'll let me hear by to-morrow's post how she is, how you all are'—and drove away, looking back as long as he could to that one window with the blind still down.

Mrs Vivyan soon returned to Matilda's room. The breakfast stood untouched on a small table near the bed. The young girl lay huddled up and shivering, though the morning was oppressively warm. Her eyes were dull and heavy, and she complained of violent headache. The thought of something more than cold, of fever—the fever of which several in the village had sickened and died—flashed through Mrs Vivyan's mind. She crushed it back as though it were a crime. 'You have taken a severe cold, my child,' said she, in a tenderer voice than her wont in speaking to Matilda; 'we will send for good Dr Ashford, and he will tell us what to do. Meanwhile, you must not rise; let me send and have your room made neat and comfortable;' and Mrs Vivyan looked round her with something of a shudder. To her refined taste, the disorder of poor Mattie Thomson's arrangements was positively painful—hat here, scarf there, gloves and shoes everywhere, the writing-table in confusion, the books in the shelves out of their places. Had Matilda been in less pain, few things would have annoyed her more than the comprehensive glance Mrs Vivyan cast round the pretty but untidy room. As it was, she only wrapped the clothes around her still more closely, and went on shivering. In half an hour's time the room was reduced to perfect order by Mrs Vivyan's own maid, who—Miss Thomson being no particular favourite of hers—shrugged her shoulders a good deal during the process. Soon Mrs Vivyan entered with a bunch of exquisite white tea-roses and flowering myrtle, and having given to the room those slight finishing touches on which so much of a refined woman's own comfort depends, took her place near the bedside, to await the doctor's arrival. Some hours passed before he came; he had been summoned, he said, to a bad case at the other end of the parish. Matilda's face was now deeply flushed, and she threw off the clothes she had gathered round her before. Her eyes were blank and heavy, and still she seemed disinclined to talk, only complaining that her head ached, ached terribly. The doctor felt pulse and brow, lifted the masses of light hair from the throbbing temples, and said, in a coaxing tone of voice: 'We must cut some of these pretty curls away, my dear; no wonder the poor head aches with such a load.'

'Oh, no, no! I won't have my hair cut,' said Mattie, starting with a transient degree of energy; but she was too weak to contend the point, and soon sank back moaning.

Mrs Vivyan followed the doctor out of the room. No mother could have waited his verdict with paler cheek or more wildly throbbing heart. 'I must not conceal from you that it is a case of typhus—typhus, my dear madam, and I am sorry to say, apparently a severe attack. The pulse is 110. In your airy house, and with all appliances, of course the danger of infection is much diminished; at the same time, I should suggest your sending for an experienced nurse, and exposing yourself as little as possible. Miss Thomson is young, and therefore we may hope the best; but these are tedious and anxious cases—tedious and anxious,' repeated the doctor, dipping the pen into the inkstand, and preparing to write his prescription.

'I myself shall nurse Miss Thomson, Dr Ashford; but I will adopt your suggestion, and at once send for an experienced nurse to help me, and to preclude the necessity of employing the other servants in the sick-room.'

'Well, my dear madam, I can only say that your resolve is very characteristic, but that I regret it. The greatest number of cases are young people, quite young; at the same time their chances of recovery are much greater than in later life. I am glad Mr Arthur is gone off to Scotland—upon my word, I am. He passed me this morning looking uncommonly bright and well. You will order Miss Thomson's room to be kept cool and airy; not much to be done just now; but I may trust to you, I know, to see the medicines regularly given. I will call again to-morrow morning.'

All that night Mrs Vivyan watched in Matilda's room. The poor girl was impatient and querulous, and thus added to that worst of sufferings the intense restlessness that accompanies fever. Very gently Mrs Vivyan replaced the light coverlet, which was all the patient could now bear, and which, at times, she flung off as intolerable; very tenderly she laid her cool white hand upon the burning forehead; very skilfully she shook the pillows and changed the sufferer's attitude; and all that time she was wrestling with one thought—that of this fever proving fatal; resolutely wrestling lest it should shape itself definitely into a guilty hope, a hideous joy. 'No, no,' she kept ceaselessly repeating to herself; 'these young creatures, the doctor said, generally recover. Matilda is sure to recover—quite sure. It is not, I think, a severe case; it came on so suddenly. It is an aggravated cold. She will recover—she is quite sure to recover.'

When the morning came, the doctor looked still more grave. The face was shrunk and old; the mind seemed affected. That day, the nurse arrived, but Mrs Vivyan still watched by the bedside the greater part of the night. 'I will do all for her that the tenderest mother could do,' she inwardly resolved. 'Were it Arthur, I could not nurse him more assiduously than I will nurse this girl. Arthur! Oh, I must write to him to-day. I must conceal from him the nature of the attack. For the first time in my life, I must deceive my boy.' And reflecting with joy that the Ross-shire moor was a three days' post at least from her Dorsetshire home, and resolving that her letter, though written the second day after her son's departure, should not be posted in time, she wrote a shorter note than usual to her darling, telling him that Matilda's feverish cold prevented her return to school just then, carefully avoiding all mention of Dr Ashford and his fears, which she still sought to persuade herself were unreal. It could not be typhus—there could not be danger; Matilda would not die!

'Poor lady,' said the nurse that evening to the housekeeper, a motherly body, free from fear of infection, who often looked in at the door of the sick-room—'poor lady, she won't hear of any danger; she hangs about the bed like any mother. *I* think it's a very bad case; but I daren't say so, she's so set upon it that Miss Thomson will recover. That's the way sometimes with those who care most for the sick person, though just as often, too, they are the first to give up. It's better this way; it keeps them going. Mrs Vivyan is wonderful, so kind and so brave. I've not seen a tear in her eye yet, she's so set her heart on it that the young lady will recover.'

But a week passed—ten days passed, and there was no sign of recovery. All that kind and judicious nursing could do, was done, apparently in vain; every change was from bad to worse. On the evening of the 22d of August, nearly a fortnight from the first seizure, the suffering within that pretty room seemed drawing to a close. The large French window was thrown open, and through it came a soft summer breeze, telling of the beds of mignonette and heliotrope on each side of the broad steps that led down from the room to the terrace-walk below. The muslin curtains, partially drawn, waved to and fro in this perfumed breeze. Every now and then, the cawing of the distant rooks and the cooing of the wood-pigeon were heard. Without, all so fresh, and beautiful, and happy; within, all so sad and hopeless. The bed had been drawn out into the middle of the room; its curtains were looped up; the light fell full on the wasted form. There had been much delirium, affording transient glimpses of the selfish and frivolous secrets of that poor little mind, whose plots, hopes, purposes, were all incoherently but plainly enough revealed to the quick ears of one watcher, though they seemed mere raving to those of the nurse. But this stage had passed away. The young girl now lay comparatively quiet, breathing heavily, and moaning from time to time. Her eyes were half open and dull, her face livid. Mrs Vivyan kept moistening the parched lips with a little wine. On a small table near the bedside stood two or three half-empty bottles, all that Dr Ashford's skill could suggest, and these the patient had not been able to take for the last four-and-twenty hours.

The nurse was busy about the sufferer, smoothing the clothes, stroking the restless hands, moving the pillows, for a kind nature cannot passively contemplate suffering; and whether the sick are soothed or not, these little loving ministrations give some comfort to the watchers by their bed of pain. 'It won't be long now, ma'am, I'm sure. Poor lamb, she's going fast, I can see. I wish the doctor may come before all is over. She does not hear a word we say, ma'am; no fear of disturbing *her;* but do, ma'am, sit down yourself; you're ready to faint. I never saw any one so pale. She wants nothing, and it's too much for you to see the very last; I'm used to it, but somehow it goes to my heart, so young as she is;' and a tear rolled down the nurse's cheek as she spoke. Mrs Vivyan kissed Matilda's forehead, and moving to the window, sat down.

For the first time, tears gathered in her large dark eyes, and her heart felt full of a sweet and sorrowful tenderness. The poor young girl! Now that she was dying, she could inspire nothing but affectionate pity. Mrs Vivyan thanked God for the sorrow she could sincerely shew. She had done her part; night and day she had watched and soothed. Never was daughter better tended. For that, too, she was thankful. How calm and beautiful the outer world was! Her thoughts flew to her Arthur: he would grieve; she feared, indeed, that he would grieve acutely; but upon his active mind, in his full fresh life, sorrow would gain no permanent hold, would find no congenial soil. He would forgive his mother for having disguised from him the nature of the attack. Had she not done so, had she risked recalling him to the infected house, there had been no interval of consciousness. Matilda could not have felt the comfort of his presence; and what mother would have endangered her son? No; he would forgive her for the half-truths her two letters had contained, and they would again be all in all to each other. God was gracious. Her noble boy was not to be linked with a lower nature, not to be beguiled by a transient fancy into a life-long regret. This poor child too; her life had been hitherto a bright and happy one; well for her that it closed early, before the selfishness darkened, and frivolity became worthlessness. All was well; all would be well. Meanwhile, her whole nature seemed to melt into ineffable tenderness and quiet; refreshing tears followed each other down her pale and noble face, and fell unnoticed on the clasped hands upon her knee. Very quietly the door opened, and the doctor appeared. Mrs Vivyan rose. He bent down over the patient with an eager look; he felt hands, brow, pulse; he took out his watch—he felt the pulse again. The nurse looked at him sorrowfully, and shook her head. Strange that he meets her eye without an answering glance of pity. He seems perplexed, and again looks closely at the patient's skin. Mrs Vivyan stood at the bottom of the bed, and convulsively grasped the footboard.

'Compose yourself, my dear madam; I do believe our young charge will live. You deserve it; upon my word, you do—you have been such a first-rate nurse; yes'—taking out the watch again—'the pulse is gone down to 90, and there is a slight moisture on the skin—very slight. Still, if she sleeps, if she only sleeps, she will recover. We must have the room kept as quiet as possible; the window may remain open for the next hour or so—can't have too much air in these cases; nothing to do but to sit by and watch, and see that the patient be well covered. We must promote this salutary moisture. I would stay myself if I had time. One person in the room, though, will be quite sufficient; and you, my dear madam, will, I hope, try to get some rest, for you look worn out; you do, indeed.'

'I shall not leave,' said Mrs Vivyan in a voice that seemed to have lost all its tone, and that made the doctor start—'I shall not leave till the crisis be past: no fear of my sleeping.'

'No fear indeed,' said the nurse; 'I never saw such a one to watch.'

'You may go, nurse; I insist upon it. This is my post; leave me here.'

As they left the room, the doctor remarked to the nurse that if Mrs Vivyan herself was not taken ill, he should be very thankful; but that there was a wildness in her eye this evening that he did not like, and that he should return about midnight to know how things were going on, and himself insist upon relieving the watch this excellent lady was so bent upon keeping by the sick-bed. Meanwhile, he urged the nurse to take advantage of her resolve, and snatch a few hours' sleep till his return.

Left by herself, Mrs Vivyan stood long in the attitude in which they left her. The evening closed in; the last rook had cawed itself silent; the breeze that brought in the perfume of the flower-beds grew somewhat chill; the clothes should be gathered closer round the sleeping girl; she does not move to do so; she is not thinking any longer of such kind ministrations. All the bitterness of the past is sweeping over her soul. The fatal morning when that woman's letter came, that woman who had stood between her and her husband's unreserved confidence; who had embittered their last parting, whose name was on his dying lips as she kissed them in the agony of her own 'late repentant love;' the many years she had endured her presence, her vanity, her littleness—all this was present with her now, all this had to be lived over again in this torturing hour. And now—it is this woman's daughter who stands between her and the son of her unutterable love. It is this girl who triumphs! She has striven in vain, prayed in vain; the struggle is over—God is against her! Suddenly she starts—her ear has caught, she fancies, a faint sound of wheels. It stops. It must have been the wind only. Who could be coming at this hour? The doctor would not return till morning. Arthur! Oh, *he* at least is safe, far from this infected house and district. But he will return, and he will find this girl recovered! He will love her the more for the sickness and the danger past. Her ravings, incoherent as they were, have told enough to shew that already there is something of a plighted promise between them. There is no hope—none! None if she lives! But *must* she live? Might not this sleep be broken?—might not the fever return? Mrs Vivyan moves softly to the head of the bed, stoops down close: the breathing is laboured still, the flush deep; but still the moisture on the brow, and still this sleep, which the doctor says will save her! O for some thunder-clap to startle her out of it; some cry of fire, some ruin to this stately house—all welcome, thrice welcome, so that this sleep were broken! The evening air blows very freshly in, lifting the muslin window-curtains till they sweep the dressing-table: should not the window be closed, lest the patient be chilled? No; the doctor said it might remain open for an hour or more. She takes out her watch: only one hour; scarce one since he left. This lifetime of agony, not sixty minutes by that little watch, and all her future life will be this same protracted torture. Arthur more and more estranged from her by underhand influence, more and more degraded in character by this unworthy love. Unless—unless! Why, this life, this poor worthless life, precious to none. What was the fancied passion of a boy? Whom did Matilda ever even seek to serve? This life, a blight upon her son's future, a poison to her own nature, what sin were it if her hand shook the balance in which it was trembling now? If, daring to push aside this paltry obstacle from his upward path, she were to save her boy. This thought startles her less, seems less a sin than did that first hope that this sickness might prove the fever. More miserable now she could not be, nor more guilty. This hatred in her heart *was* murder. Again a rush of wind wilder than before. How strange it sounded on the gravel-walk! almost like footsteps. No! it is the violent beating of her heart and temples at the thought that flashed in upon her mind with that last gust. Another such, only a little stronger, and that small table, with its medicine-tray, with these bottles, might fall, and falling, the sound would waken Matilda! Quick and noiseless as light Mrs Vivyan has moved—her hand is on that table. The white soft hand, how heavily it leans—the slight table inclines; a further pressure, and it will fall! Her face is fearful to see, so set, so ghastly. Her eyes are fixed upon the sleeping girl, but she sees nothing, hears nothing, so terrible the strife within. Suddenly, a hand is laid upon her shoulder—a start, a scream, a crash, and she has fainted on the floor.

How it came about that Arthur was there, is simply explained. Two days before, he had received a letter from his mother, mentioning, indeed, Matilda's protracted indisposition, but little calculated to awaken fear in any but a lover's heart. The young man was saddened, however, and his face shewed it plainly. Now the same post had brought his servant a letter from a young woman in the village, telling, with some degree of customary exaggeration, how that Dr Ashford was night and day at the Hall, and Miss Thomson all but given up. Seeing, therefore, a cloud on his young master's face, Saunders naturally concluded that he, too, had received a like report, and with the lugubrious satisfaction men of his class feel in the excitement of bad news, proceeded to comment on it. Arthur set out that hour and travelled day and night. They were his wheels that his mother heard. He had met Dr Ashford on the road, and been told by him of the present crisis, and the hope of recovery. Dreading even to make his arrival known, lest anything should occur to disturb this blessed sleep, he had sent back carriage and servant to the village, and jumping out at the gate, had crept round the house unseen by all, and made his way to the window of his mother's room. There he had watched till the rising wind made him tremble lest the open window should chill her; yet he feared to startle his mother by his sudden appearance into a sound that might rouse the sleeper. He would steal up the steps very gently; he would look in unseen; his mother would be watching by the bed. His mother! Could that woman be his mother who stood there with that deadly look on her face? A horror came over him, and entering, he laid his hand on her shoulder.

But Matilda? Too surely, she had waked at that wild scream and crash—waked but half conscious, and in violent agitation, which the presence of Arthur served to increase. He took her in his arms—he kissed her lips—he tried to soothe her. When the nurse and housekeeper rushed in, scared by his violent ringing, they were scared still more by his presence and the sight of Mrs Vivyan prostrate in a death-like swoon. When the doctor returned at midnight, he pronounced his patient's case hopeless. Two days later, she sank. Arthur never left her. His agony was heightened by the conviction that he had been the means of her death. For though the recollection of that look on his mother's face froze his soul, he never guessed at the purpose with which she was standing there, and believed that the start he gave her was the cause of all. In his despair, he clasped the dying and unconscious girl in his arms—in his despair, he hung over the clay till they hasted to bury it out of his sight. Mental distress and violent exertion combined had predisposed him to the influence of contagion. On the evening of the day that Mattie was laid in her mother's grave, he began to shew all the early symptoms of the fatal fever. Long and devotedly did the mother nurse her darling boy; but from the first, she had no hope of his recovery. No one guessed the truth, but *she* knew that in heart and will, if not in deed, she was a murderess. It could not be that God would spare her son! Nor was he spared. When the raging fever was over, rapid decline followed. She had not separated Arthur and Matilda; she had but killed them *both*. We have said that no one guessed the truth. The servants and the doctor at once adopted a seemingly obvious explanation. Mrs Vivyan, worn out by long-continued watching, had lost her usual power of self-control. Startled and shocked by her son's unexpected appearance in the infected room, it was but too natural that she should faint away. Nay, Arthur, as we have seen, blamed no other but himself; and yet that strange stony look on her face had left a vague sense of horror and estrangement on his mind; and often in his ravings he would push her away, and say she was not his mother. Even when reason returned, little remained of their old relation to each other. Arthur was grateful rather than affectionate; his mother devoted, submissive, but fond and caressing no longer.

Her demeanour was that of a slave rather than a parent. The image of the girl she had purposed to kill pushed her away from her boy's pillow. There was blood-guiltiness on her soul, even if that white hand were free. She was not worthy to take her Arthur in her arms as heretofore. So the days passed, he growing weaker and weaker—his mother's heart crushed beneath the burden of her intolerable secret, even more than by her intensity of sorrow. Thin and haggard, her rich hair suddenly streaked with white, her manner abstracted to all, abject in its humility to Arthur, Dr Ashford shook and tapped his head ominously, and whispered to the nurse that he only hoped the mind would hold out!

One fine October morning, the young man, in the restlessness of weakness, entreated to have his chair wheeled into his mother's room. He wanted, he said, to look out of that window once more. When there, old associations of childhood, early youth, all inextricably blent with her love, came sweeping over his memory, and as the tears ran down his wasted face, calling her to him, he hid it on her breast. She motioned to the nurse to leave them. The courage of a broken heart came over her, and she knelt down beside her son. None ever knew what passed between them, but it was pronounced by doctor and nurse that the exertion and emotion occasioned by the change of room had been too much for their patient. In the course of the night, alarming symptoms set in; when the mid-day sun next streamed into the sick-room, it was plain that the young man's life was fast, fast ebbing away. Very sad the beauty of the dying face, but sadder far the despair in the mother's. It was *she* who had laid her darling there. This, then, was all her love had done for him. O God, that Matilda were living at this time! that they two were wandering hand in hand in the sunshine, and she could lay her down and lie forgotten in her grave! She catches the significant expression on the doctor's face: Arthur is going to die, is dying—and he will not look at her, will not speak to her. She raises him in her arms—she calls him by every name of fondness she called him by in childhood. Something of a smile passes over his face. Oh, surely he sees, hears her, feels her love. His lips part—it is over! The nurse thought he had said, 'Mother;' Mrs Vivyan knew that his dying word was 'Mattie!'

A DISRESPECTABLE PAPER.

'YOUNG MAN, never use *slang*,' was a remark made to us in our youth by Uncle Squaretoes, upon the occasion of our having entitled him, in an outbreak of genial affection, *a grand old buffer*. 'It is a sure sign in him who uses it of *going to the dogs*.'

'The late Alderman Penguin talked a good deal of slang,' returned I, with quiet triumph, for my uncle had been wont to swear by the alderman, I knew.

'Yes,' replied Mr Squaretoes, with warmth; 'and when he died, we saw what came of it. While everybody thought he had made at least his *plum*, his great estate, for all his *bulling* and *bearing*, was in reality heavily *dipped*. He was known on the Stock Exchange as being little better than *a lame duck*. It would have been actually preferable if he had been *white-washed* at once, than that his balance-sheets should have been *cooked* in the manner they were. No, no, young man; take my word for it, that there is nothing so indicative of A SCREW LOOSE somewhere in a man as the use of slang; and if you wish to see *the colour of my money*, you will avoid it.'

In the face of such a threat, I was not foolish enough to point out to the old gentleman the five examples of commercial slang, the two of legal, or the three of miscellaneous, in which he had himself indulged during his brief rebuke. The jolly old bird has been *grassed in* this long time—and I am happy to say that he *cut up* for a good deal of money—but I always think of my Uncle Squaretoes when I hear anybody taking the English language under his protection and denouncing innovations. Happy is the man who does not live in a glass-house—nay, in quite a conservatory—in this respect, and who can venture to cast a stone.

The Gallican gibberish which pervades drawing-room conversation, or, at all events, drawing-room novels, is not only not English, but not French. It has been well observed that if a well-bred Frenchman were informed that there was anything upon the *tapis*, he would assuredly go down upon his knees to look for it; that if he were told of the *beau monde*, 'he would imagine it meant the beautiful world that God made, not the half-dozen streets and squares between Hyde Park Corner and the Chelsea Bunhouse;' or that if he were asked to a *thé dansante*, he would not know what it meant. And with regard to drawing-room slang, if it comes to a choice of evils, we confess we much prefer the laudatory vulgarisms of *stunning* or *screaming*, to their equivalent, in fashionable and feminine parlance, of *cheeaarming*—or 'charming' in eight syllables.

What is *keeping harmony*, *middle distance*, *aërial perspective*, *delicate handling*, *nervous chiaroscuro*, but the slang of the Studios? What is the endeavour to unbecomingly elongate the most sacred names, and the artificial whine in which we sometimes hear an entire sermon recited, but the slang of the Pulpit? Indeed, if we were to *open up* this subject—which is the slang of Commercial Enterprise—and *ventilate* it thoroughly—which is the slang of Newspaper Politics—we should not know where to stop. Since we have shewn that slang of some sort is common to all ranks, it can scarcely be said that the subject is unworthy of investigation. 'A London Antiquary'* has at all events considered it of sufficient interest to justify him in giving us a Dictionary of the slang in use in the London streets, in the two Universities, in the Houses of Parliament, in the dens of St Giles, and in the palaces of St James. According to his own account, he procured his information concerning the more unapproachable classes while he was collecting materials from old ballads, penny-histories, and other printed street narratives, for a forthcoming History of Cheap Literature; he frequently had occasion to make the acquaintance of divers chanters and patterers in Seven Dials and the Borough; and with some of these men an arrangement was made that they should collect the cant and slang words used by the wandering tribes in London and the country. To prevent deception and mistake, the words and phrases thus gathered were checked off by other chanters and tramps similarly employed; and the total result is now presented to us. Three thousand words—notwithstanding that all immodest ones have been carefully excluded—have thus been added to the thirty-eight thousand words in the English language. In the Dictionary, the *cant* and *slang* terms are classed together, from the exceeding difficulty of arranging them separately, but they are in reality quite distinct and separate terms. 'Cant, apart from religious hypocrisy, refers to the old secret language, by allegory or distinct terms, of gipsies, thieves, tramps, and beggars. Slang represents that evanescent, vulgar language, ever changing with fashion and taste, which has principally come into vogue during the last seventy or eighty years, spoken by persons in every grade of life, rich and poor, honest and dishonest.' Cant, in the lapse of time, often becomes slang; the words *prig* and *cove*, for instance, which are now mere street vulgarisms, having been once cant and secret terms.

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* *A Dictionary of Modern Slang, Cant, and Vulgar Words.* By a London Antiquary. Hotten, antiquarian bookseller, Piccadilly.

'It would appear,' says Mayhew, 'that not only are all races divisible into wanderers and settlers, but that each civilised or settled tribe has generally some wandering horde intermingled with, and in a measure preying upon it. In South Africa, the naked and miserable Hottentots are pestered by the still more abject Sonquas; and it may be some satisfaction for us to know that our old enemies at the Cape, the Caffres, are troubled with a tribe of rascals called Fingoes—the former term, we are informed by travellers, signifying beggars, and the latter, wanderers and outcasts.' These wandering tribes are all remarkable for their use of a cant language with which to conceal their designs and plunderings. 'The secret jargon, or rude speech, of the vagabonds who hang upon the Hottentots is termed Cuzecat. In Finland, the fellows who steal seal-skins, pick the pockets of bear-skin overcoats, and talk cant, are termed Lappes. In France, the secret language of highwaymen, housebreakers, and pickpockets is named Argot. The brigands and more romantic rascals of Spain term their private tongue Germania, or Robbers' Language. Rothwalsch, or Red Italian, is synonymous with cant and thieves' talk in Germany;' while the crowds of lazy beggars that infest the streets of Naples and Rome, and the brigands near Pompeii, have a secret tongue which they call *Gergo.*

Upon this subject a writer in *Notes and Queries* well remarks: 'The investigation of the origin and principles of cant and slang language opens a curious field of inquiry, replete with considerable interest to the philologist and the philosopher. It affords a remarkable instance of lingual contrivance, which, without the introduction of much arbitrary matter, has developed a system of communicating ideas, having all the advantages of a foreign language.' Cant, in the sense of pulpit hypocrisy, is derived in the old *Spectator* from one Andrew Cant, a Presbyterian minister in some illiterate part of Scotland, who had obtained by use the power of preaching in such a dialect that he was not understood by any but his own congregation, and not by all of them; but cant, in the sense we are speaking of it, is derived from *chant*, a beggar's whine; *chanter*, a street-talker and tramp, being the very term still used among vagabonds. There seems to be little doubt that the secret language itself originated with the gipsies, who came over into the country early in the reign of Henry VIII. In illustration of the connection of cant with the Cingari tongue, we have offered to us a list of gipsy and (often) Hindoo words with their English adoptions. Among these, the more familiar cant (now slang) expressions are: *Bosh*, which the London Antiquary—and not we—says is Persian for 'rubbish;' *Mull*, which is gipsy for 'to spoil or bungle;' and *That's the cheese*, which he affirms to be a Hindoo expression. We ourselves believe that the Antiquary might have looked much nearer home for this last derivation. *The correct thing*, and *the thing*, to express 'the fashion,' have been long in use among the vulgar; and it may be more easily imagined that this may have been Frenchified by some fellow proud of his foreign acquirements, into the *chose*, and so into *the cheese*, than that the word ever came from the sunny plains of Central Asia. We are the more inclined to distrust our author in this matter, inasmuch as some of his subsequent derivations are manifestly far-fetched, not to say absurd.

In defining *Bobby*, the well-known slang for a policeman, he says: 'Bobby is an old English word for striking and hitting—a quality not unknown to policemen.' While the simple fact is, that *Bobby* is a familiar application of Sir Robert Peel's baptismal name to the policeman, who is usually designated a *peeler*, in more obvious compliment to the memory of him who passed the New Police Act. *All my eye and Betty Martin* is well known to be an adaptation of the Popish prayer, *Oh mihi, beate Martine;* but we are not so sure that *Humbug*—which Richardson denies a place to in his Dictionary, although he uses it to express the meaning of other words—is a corruption of Hamburg, 'from which town so many false bulletins came during the war in the last century.' We also receive with caution the statement that small boys in the United States are permitted by their guardians to *Gol Darn* things, and so are prevented from actual profanity, or that such a moral waste-pipe for juvenile passion as *By-the-ever-living-jumping-Moses* is ever laid on by a judicious parent.

However—to return to the Cingaris—our London Antiquary 'feels confident that there is a gipsy element in our English language hitherto unrecognised;' and instances 'jockey,' which means, in the gipsy tongue, 'a whip;' and 'bamboozle,' which has so sorely puzzled the lexicographers.

Some words have, it seems, been elevated from cant into perfect respectability. 'Chete was in ancient cant what "chop" is in the Canton-Chinese—an almost inseparable adjunct. Everything was termed a chete, and qualified by a noun adjective, which shewed what kind of a chete was meant; for instance, "crashing chetes" were teeth; a "moffling chete," a napkin; a "grunting chete," a pig, &c. Cheat, now-a-days, means to defraud or swindle, and lexicographers have tortured etymology for an original—but without success. Escheats and escheatours have been named, but with great doubts; indeed, Steevens, the learned commentator of Shakspeare, acknowledged that he "did not recollect to have met with the word *cheat* in our ancient writers."* Cheat, to defraud, then, is no other than an old cant term, somewhat altered in its meaning,† and as such it should be described in the next Etymological Dictionary.'

Pek was in cant language 'meat,' and we now say, when we are hungry, that we are *peckish.* The vagabonds, it seems, lay every tongue under contribution to furnish forth their strange vocabulary. 'Argot is the London thieves' word for their secret language—it is, of course, from the French, but that matters not, so long as it is incomprehensible to the police and the mob. Dominé, a teacher, is from the Latin; and Don, a person of importance, has been filched from the Spanish. Donna and Feeles, a woman and children, is an odd mixture of Spanish and French; whilst Dudds, the vulgar term for clothes, has been pilfered from the Gaelic. Feele, a daughter, from the French; and Frow, a girl or wife, from the German—are common tramps' terms; so are Gent, silver, from the French Argent; and Vial, a country town, also from the French. Gip, a college servant, very appropriately comes from the Greek Gups (a wolf); Horrid-horn, a fool, from the Erse; and Gloak, a man, from the Scotch.' *Crack*, in the sense of excellent—a *crack* corps—was not a vulgarism in Henry VIII.'s time, nor was to *crack up*, in the sense of praise, which has now become so popular an Americanism. *Dodge*—a cunning trick—is from the Anglo-Saxon; and ancient nobles (says the London Antiquary, and not we) used to get each other's *dander up* before appealing to their swords. *Gallivanting* was an exceedingly polite expression; and a clergyman, preaching at Paul's Cross, thought nothing of bidding a noisy hearer to '*hold his gab.*' It would have lowered the great Lord Bacon, in the opinion of Uncle Squaretoes, had he known that his lordship writes of the lower part of a gentleman's face as his *gills.* Finally, the phrase,

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* Shakspeare's *Henry IV.*, Part ii. Act ii. Scene iv.

† It is easy to see how cheat became synonymous with fraud, when we remember that it was one of the most common words of the greatest class of cheats in the country.

I'll make him *buckle* under'—which word is used by Shakspeare in *Henry IV.* (Part ii. Act i. Scene i.), but of which the commentators supply no other example—is common in the mouth of every London costermonger to this day.

Slang, properly speaking, is the language of street-humour, and of fast life whether high or low; and it was at its height—under the name of *flash*—when the Prince Regent was in his rakish minority. Webster and Ogilvie are the only lexicographers who mention it; Johnson admitting it indeed, but only as 'the preterite of sling!' It is not derived from 'the *slangs* or fetters worn by criminals, and so called from requiring a sling of string to keep them from the ground,' but from a gipsy word signifying gibberish. The familiar wants and failings of life are, as might be expected, well represented by it; there being no less than thirty-four terms to express the degrees of intoxication, from the first stage of *boskiness* to that last scene of all in the sad drama of Drink, wherein the sufferer *can't see a hole in a ladder;* while the coin of the realm is insulted by no less than one hundred and twenty distinct nicknames, from the humble *brown*, or copper, to the aristocratic *flimsey*, or bank-note; nay, if we include theatrical slang, by one hundred and twenty-one; for should no money be forthcoming in the form of salary, the Company is facetiously informed of it by the phrase, 'the *ghost* don't walk.'

It will be news to many persons that, in addition to a secret language, the wandering tribes of England have a system of hieroglyphics of their own; private marks and symbolic signs by which to record their successes and failures, and thereby to give advice to succeeding beggars. The whole country seems to be dotted over with these beggar finger-posts and guide-stones. Mr Rawlinson, in his Report to the General Board of Health, from Havant, declares:

'There is a sort of blackguards' literature, and the initiated understand each other by slang [cant] terms, by pantomimic signs, and by hieroglyphics. *The vagrant's mark may be seen in Havant, on corners of streets, on door-posts, and on house-steps. Simple as these chalk-lines appear, they inform the succeeding vagrants of all they require to know; and a few white scratches may say, "be importunate" or "pass on."*'

Again, in *Notes and Queries*, under the head of Mendicant Freemasonry, there is this very singular statement, which, however, refers to provincial towns only, London being looked upon as 'home,' and, besides, as too acute a city to be duped by such means:

'Persons,' remarks the writer, 'indiscreet enough to open their purses to the relief of the beggar tribe, would do well to take a readily learned lesson as to the folly of that misguided benevolence which encourages and perpetuates vagabondism. Every door or passage is pregnant with instruction as to the error committed by the patron of beggars, as the beggar-marks shew that a system of freemasonry is followed, by which a beggar knows whether it will be worth his while to call into a passage or knock at a door. Let any one examine the entrances to the passages in any town, and there he will find chalk-marks, unintelligible to him, but significant enough to beggars. If a thousand towns are examined, the same marks will be found at every passage entrance. The passage-mark is a cipher with a twisted tail; in some cases, the tail projects into the passage; in others, outwardly; thus seeming to indicate whether the houses down the passage are worth calling at or not. Almost every door has its marks: these are varied. In some cases, there is a cross on the brickwork; in others, a cipher: the figures 1, 2, 3 are also used. Every person may for himself test the accuracy of these statements by the examination of the brickwork near by his own doorway; thus demonstrating that mendicity is a regular trade, carried out upon a system calculated to save time, and realise the largest profits.'

Charts of successful begging-districts are rudely drawn, and symbolical signs attached to each house to shew whether its inmates are charitable (?) or the reverse. 'In many cases,' says Mayhew, 'there is over the kitchen mantel-piece of a tramp's lodging-house *a map of the district*, dotted here and there with memoranda of failure or success.' One of these maps has been obtained by one of the 'London Antiquary's' vagabond friends, and a fac-simile of it graces the frontispiece of this volume. The locality is near Maidstone in Kent, and it was perhaps sketched by a wandering *screever* in payment for a night's lodging—a *screever* being a street-artist, who portrays in coloured chalk those wonderful pictures one sees upon the pavements, and lets the same out to other gentlemen for a consideration, who have not artistic talent themselves, but whom the public believe to be the original draughtsmen. The hieroglyphics used upon the chart, it seems, convey the following pieces of information:

× No good; too poor, and know too much.
⌒+ Stop: if you have what they want, they will buy. They are pretty 'fly' (knowing).
)— Go in this direction; it is better than the other road. Nothing that way.
◊ Bone (good). Safe for a 'cold tatur,' if for nothing else. 'Cheese your patur' (don't talk much) here.
▽ Coopered (spoiled) by too many tramps calling there.
□ Gammy (unfavourable); likely to have you taken up. Mind the dog.
⊙ Flummuxed (dangerous); sure of a month in quod (prison).
⊕ Religious, but tidy on the whole.

Our Antiquary has 'little hesitation' in ascribing this invention to the gipsies. 'How strange it would be,' says he, 'if some Belzoni or Champollion discovered in these beggars' marks the fragments of ancient Egyptian or Hindoo hieroglyphics.' And we most cordially agree with him, never letting slip from our memory, however, the discovery of 'Bil Stumps hys mark' in *Pickwick*. To conclude this disrespectable paper with a really most interesting statement, we may mention a fact brought under the notice of the government by Mr Rawlinson, that the sign of the vagabond is to be met with upon the very threshold of the fatal Tree: 'The murderer's signal is even exhibited from the gallows; for a red handkerchief held in the hand of the felon about to be executed, is a token that he dies without having betrayed any professional secrets.'

JACQUES FONTAINE.

John de la Fontaine, a gentleman of Maine, holding a commission in the royal household of France, was one of the first who embraced Protestantism in that country. Resigning his place, he retired to a small estate near Mans, where, in 1563, his house was entered by a band of fanatics, or rather robbers pillaging under the flag of Catholicism, and he and his wife murdered. His three sons contrived to escape to Rochelle, then the stronghold of the Huguenots. Jacques, the second of these brothers, then fourteen years old, was kindly received by a shoemaker, who taught him his trade, at which in time he prospered. He married twice; the second time unhappily, for his wife attempted to poison him. Criminals of this kind excited at that time great interest, and petitions poured in on Henry IV. for her pardon. Befor deciding on the matter, that monarch desired to se the husband who had had such a narrow escap

When he beheld a fine, tall, hearty old man, with a long gray beard—like his own—the king exclaimed: 'Ventre Saint-Gris! poison the handsomest man in the kingdom! She has no excuse: let her be hanged!' And she was hanged accordingly. The handsomest man in France lived until the year 1633, when he left behind him some 9000 livres, and an only son, bearing the same name. This Jacques Fontaine left the shop for the pulpit, in which he acquired some reputation. At this period a close connection existed between England and the province of Saintonge, a brisk contraband trade supplying ready means of communication between the Reformers of both countries. During the civil war, the French Protestants received assistance from their co-religionists in England, and it was in reliance on them that Rochelle sustained the memorable siege, the result of which deprived it of both commercial and political importance.

Jacques Fontaine often went to London, and on one of his visits to that capital found an English wife. The result of the marriage was a son, born in 1658. Jacques Fontaine, the subject of this history, was, when a child, lamed by the carelessness of a servant. In consequence of this he was devoted to the ministry, a profession becoming every day more dangerous. Continual disputes were the precursors of the coming persecution. Jacques Fontaine seemed formed to distinguish himself in such a troublous time; he was brought up as became the great-grandson of a martyr, and the son of a zealous minister. Two incidents in his early school-days gave some indication of his future character. M. Arnauld, his schoolmaster, carried out Solomon's precept concerning the use of the rod to its fullest extent. The boys one day debated as to the number of stripes he gave at each whipping: none could resolve the problem, and Jacques undertook to settle the question on the first opportunity. This he had not to wait for long. During the preliminary preparation, he cried and screamed as usual, but at the first stroke became silent, finding it impossible to cry and count at the same time. M. Arnauld, surprised, looked in his face for an explanation: seeing nothing there, gave a second blow rather harder than before; still Master Jacques kept silent. Again the rod descended, this time with such force, that the delinquent could not suppress a cry, but (intent upon his self-imposed task) it took the shape of a loud 'Three!'

'Ah, you rogue,' exclaimed the master, 'you are counting, are you? There—count, count, count!' accompanying his words with such rapidity of action, that the calculating boy was fain to give up all idea of computation.

Jacques had a school-crony who shared everything with him, even to the floggings. When one of these friends had earned correction, the other deliberately committed some fault, that he might be punished with him. M. Arnauld, becoming aware of this extraordinary arrangement, met their desires by registering the bad marks of each, and when they were pretty nearly balanced, flogged the Damon and Pythias of Rochelle together. Spite of flagellation, young Fontaine made little progress as a scholar. Change of tutors was tried, without much effect, until, at the age of seventeen, he was placed under a clever but eccentric man, M. de la Bussiere, who drew out his long-slumbering talent; and by the time he was twenty, he could defend his theological opinions against all comers.

When Louis XIV. ascended the throne of France, the Reformation resembled somewhat a revolt of the nobles against the royal authority, the higher classes supplying, comparatively, the larger number of proselytes. The Huguenot leaders—better warriors than theologians—sought the aid of their ministers to confute the arguments of their opponents, to draw up their manifestoes, and to recruit their armies. The provincial synods, where the ministers ruled supreme, became formidable; and as the nobles gradually fell away from the cause, their tendency became more democratic, more intolerable to the throne. That the result of a conflict between the sovereign and the synods would end in the discomfiture of the latter, scarce admitted of a doubt: the feelings of the majority of the population were adverse to the Reformers; their misfortunes excited no sympathy; the bigoted Catholics rejoiced; while those who were indifferent, saw in the sufferers for conscience' sake only so many infatuated fools. Their taxes were doubled; every manœuvre ingenuity could suggest was practised to reduce the numbers of the heretics. During the earlier persecution of the Huguenots—approved of, though not perpetrated by the government—Jacques Fontaine became remarkable for his eloquence, firmness, address, and enthusiasm. He was soon arrested, imprisoned, and tried, at Bordeaux, before the parliament, for having held religious assemblies, and also for having prayed in prison! He defended himself with great spirit and skill, and was acquitted. On being released, he returned to his preaching, now attempting to raise the people; but his warlike exhortations failed in their intended effect: the king's name was yet a tower of strength in France; and Fontaine complains: 'Many there were who had borne unmoved the bitter tortures of persecution, who had been stripped of their property without yielding to temptation, and yet at last gave way under the influence of specious arguments from false friends, who represented to them that, as it was a commandment of God to honour and obey the king, they failed in duty to Him when they refused obedience to the monstrous decrees of the king. They thus became idolatrous renegades, and gave adoration to that which they knew to be nothing more than a morsel of bread.'

'Dragooning' became the order of the day; the troopers of M. de Louvois harassed the Huguenots everywhere. Our hero, disguised as a country gentleman, well armed, and mounted on an Arabian with scarlet housings, and familiar with every path, passed from place to place, exhorting, comforting, and assisting. He did not fear an encounter with the royal soldiers—he says he could hit a mark at fifteen paces when at full gallop, and had resolved to adopt the Parthian system, 'I wait,' he says, 'for any one who shall distance the rest by the fleetness of his horse, shoot him, gallop off, and load my pistol to be ready for another.' He is silent as to whether he ever had occasion to put this principle into practice.

In October 1685 the Edict of Nantes was revoked, and flight was the only resource of the Protestants; nor was this to be easily effected; not only were the dragoons to be eluded, but vessels of war watched all the ports. Jacques Fontaine having collected a little band of twelve—nine of whom were women, his betrothed, Mademoiselle Boursiquot, being among them—bargained with an English captain to take them across the Channel at one hundred francs per head. Accordingly, one night, the wind favouring them, the refugees, in a fishing-boat, gained the ship in safety, and were duly landed in England. Struck with the cheapness of bread in England, Fontaine made a speculation in flour, which he sent to France, and on which he realised a considerable profit. Two other adventures, however, in which he took part proved unfortunate, and necessitated the disposal of his watch, chain, spoons, and other valuables.

A Mr Doune of Barnstaple, a well-to-do bachelor, received our fugitive minister into his house, treating him in the kindest manner; but his sister, a maiden lady of thirty-three, 'short, thin, sallow, marked with the small-pox,' and worth some L.3000, went still further, and through her brother, proposed to marry him—the difficulty respecting Mademoiselle Boursiquot being removed by Mr Doune himself offering to take her for *his* wife. Fontaine left it to his betrothed to decide: and she preferring to share his poverty and struggles, the flattering offers of Mr and Miss Doune were declined, and the young couple made sure of each other by an immediate marriage. The good folks of Barnstaple shewed their appreciation of true lovers by furnishing them anonymously with everything they wanted. But this dependence suited neither Fontaine nor his wife. He took a situation in the household of Sir H. Tynte of Bridgewater; but not being able to endure the separation from his bride, soon gave it up. He was then offered a living of L.30 per annum; but on account of his scruples respecting church government, and of being 'told by the Presbyterians that the unfortunate people who had been executed after the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion, a few days before our arrival, and whose heads and quarters were exposed on all the towers, gates, and cross-roads, looking absolutely like butchers' shambles, had many of them been guilty of no crime but that of being Presbyterians'—he refused to sign the necessary documents.

He left Barnstaple for Taunton, where he was ordained by the Presbyterian synod; joining to his spiritual pursuit the more temporal ones of mercer, hatter, and grocer, he soon possessed the handsomest and most thriving shop in Taunton. His mode of conducting his business was calculated to secure custom. He procured linen, galloons, thread, needles, tin and copper-ware, direct from Holland; French refugees at Exeter supplied him with beaver hats; and he sold unadulterated French brandy, 'whereas the English generally played tricks with theirs.'

Then came the 'glorious Revolution.' 'Three sorry-looking Dutchmen' took possession of Taunton without opposition. Times became hard. Fontaine wound up his business, and tried teaching; dissatisfied with the result, he set up a manufactory of 'calimanco,' in which he proved successful; at the end of three years finding himself the possessor of L.3000. Ever anxious for change, he accepted the ministry of a small refugee community near Cork, where he entered upon the manufacture of broadcloth with his usual success; but a difference arising between him and his flock, he left them for the north of Ireland, where at Bear Haven he established a fishery. Here, amid a peasantry who hated him both as a foreigner and a heretic, he preached and fished with varying fortune. The English government looked with favour on these establishments in Ireland, forming so many little Protestant colonies interested in maintaining the authority of the new king. Fontaine, observing that the bay near which he dwelt was a favourite resort of French privateers, proposed to the Duke of Ormond a plan of fortification. The duke, astonished at the presumption of a minister of the gospel reading him a lesson in the art of war, replied: 'Pray to God for us, and we will defend you!'

Early one morning in June 1704, a French privateer, mounting ten guns, entered the harbour, landed forty men and two small cannon, and commenced an attack on Jacques Fontaine's house, garrisoned by himself, seven men, his wife, and children; but the place was a complete arsenal. Its commandant, undaunted by the odds, defended it so effectually, that, after eight hours' combat, the siege was raised, with the loss to the assailants of three killed and seven wounded, the defenders having one man wounded. Immediately the battle was over, the victorious soldier-priest wrote a dispatch to the Duke of Ormond, commencing: 'Since I had the honour of paying my respects to your Grace at Kinsale, I have not failed to pray for you daily, in conformity with your request; but you must allow me to complain that your Grace has not been equally true to the promise you then made of defending me; for without your assistance, I have had to defend myself from the attack of a French corsair.' Fontaine set to work and constructed a small fort, armed with 6-pounders from a wreck, to command the entrance to the creek. The government supplied him with ammunition, and granted him a pension of five shillings per day. For four years he was undisturbed, although living in constant apprehension of another attack, when a privateer sailed into the harbour under false colours, landed her men at midnight, and nearly surprised the minister. The enemy surrounded the house, and set fire to the grain and stabling, till Fontaine could not see his foes for the smoke. His garrison consisted of his wife, children, and four servants only. With these he made a stout resistance. Three times the roof of the house was fired and extinguished. While trying to frustrate a fourth attempt, Fontaine's gun burst, threw him down, breaking his collar-bone and three of his ribs. His wife then assumed the command. At last the enemy grew tired of the obstinate struggle, retreated from a breach they had made in the wall, and called on the little band to surrender. The firing ceased, and Fontaine advancing to the breach to treat, nearly fell a victim to the treachery of one of the Irish officers of the privateer. Upon this the conflict recommenced; a second truce was made, and terms of capitulation agreed upon—namely, life and liberty for all the garrison; but the victors, spite of the terms, took Fontaine and two of his sons prisoners on board their ship.

Madame Fontaine was not idle; she tried persuasions and threats to induce the Roman Catholic priest of the place to use his influence to obtain her husband's liberty, but in vain; and then determined to follow the vessel by land, and keep it in sight as long as possible. She was seen, and a boat despatched from the vessel, and a ransom of L.100 agreed upon. She could only obtain L.80. The captain took that, keeping one of her sons as hostage for the remainder. The governor of Kinsale, on receiving Fontaine's account of his treatment, took retaliatory measures with the prisoners of war there; so that when the privateer, after hovering about some time, returned to St Malo without the ransom, the captain found himself in disgrace, and was compelled to restore his hostage.

After this, Jacques Fontaine wisely resolved to leave Bear Haven. He obtained compensation for his losses, and settled in Dublin, where he lived to a good old age. His family became gradually dispersed, the majority settling in America, where their descendants still honour the memory of their stout-hearted ancestor.

TRODDEN OUT.

The fount is not frozen nor dry
Whence that heart drew its tears,
No Summer shall e'er set it free
Through all the barren years.

No Autumn shall e'er lead it forth
From the dumb gasping clay,
To murmur its sweet sorrow out
Along the ancient way.

The fount is not frozen nor dry,
Needs nor sunlight nor rain;
Man's foot hath been set on its source,
And it flows not again.

EMERITUS.

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THE SECRET OF THE SHELL.

THE battle of Vimieira, fought in 1808, was glorious in its results, for the British. The enemy's ranks were thinned on the field of battle, as discomfited enemy's ranks are wont to be; and if—the battle over, and the dead examined—small bullets had seemed to have done more than ordinary execution that day, the matter was not one in itself of special wonderment. Connected with that hail-storm of small bullets, there was, however, a dead secret.

The battle of Vimieira over, a certain tale ran the round of the French army. Some believed it, others did not; but upon one point all were agreed—namely, that if not true, it might have been true; it was a matter worth consideration. As the tale would have it to be, somebody in the British service had discovered an ingenious way of packing up musket-balls in bomb-shells, and thus smuggling them, under false pretences, into the French lines. Time sped on, and the tale acquired consistency. Deponent came into the French camp, and stated: Imprimis—that a certain 'Sir Schrappnell' had been banging away for a long time in the year eighteen hundred and three on the sands of a certain 'Mounht-bay.' The orthography I retain on the authority of the German general, Decker, and his French commentators, Messieurs Terquem and Favé; though Mount's-bay will be a mode of spelling better approved by our friends down west; and the experimenter's name will be 'Shrapnel.' Deponent further stated that the aforesaid 'Sir Schrappnell' occupied himself, during 1805, in conducting similar experiments at Woolwich. The belief grew into a conviction at last that many of the musket-balls which found their death-billet at Vimieira had never come from a musket at all.

In 1811, during the battle of Albuera, another part of the secret came out. Some of the new conjuring-boxes which had not exploded came into the hands of the French. Opening them very carefully, to avoid the consequences of any hidden danger, the whole thing was pronounced a mockery, a delusion, and a sham. A shell of cast-iron, rather more thin than ordinary, and stuffed full of leaden bullets, comfortably packed in gunpowder, to keep them from wabbling—such was the mystery revealed of the new war conjuring-box. Dapper little French officers of *génie* looked into it, and pooh-poohed it. Only a thick-headed Anglais could have entertained the absurd notion of stuffing a shell with musket-balls, with only a little gunpowder between them, when gunpowder—nothing else than gunpowder—would have been so much more the thing.

Had it rested with the French artillery and engineers there and then on the spot, nothing more would have been done towards investigating the powers and construction of the new conjuring-box. It is particularly disagreeable for a soldier to own that he has been circumvented by any new device of the enemy. To be killed in war by orthodox weapons may be a matter of regret to a dead man's ghost; to be killed in war by schemes unauthorised; to be penetrated by balls mysteriously delivered; or blown to pieces by means unknown to all save the assailant, must be, to dead soldiers' ghosts, a matter of vexation. At this time, there happened, however, to be somewhere in France—he never took kindly to Spanish campaigning—a certain little man, who, having been an artillery officer in his youth, was better qualified than many others to judge of the British invention. That little man did not care for precedent or usage one fig, and he submitted the invention to the scrutiny of a commission. What might have come out of that commission, under more favourable circumstances, will never be known. Troublous times were at hand. How the little man went to Russia in the subsequent year; was frozen out; and, on returning, found France too hot for him, is a matter of history. There was an end of that tranquillity so desirable for commissioners examining into the merits of a new war-shell.

In 1813 came the siege of San Sebastian. The British were victorious indeed, but France has no reason to be ashamed that on the day in question she was vanquished. Almost two-thirds of the garrison were killed or wounded before the fort, in which the defenders had taken refuge after the capture of the town, surrendered. The French author, Monsieur Belmas, in his journal of the sieges sustained by the French in the peninsula, helps us to understand the cause of the tremendous slaughter which forced capitulation. 'The day following,' says he, prosecuting a narrative the beginning of which does not concern us here—'the day following, the English discharged from their batteries a terrible fire, as well upon the breaches as upon the town. They threw an immense number of shells, holding, some of them, no less than four hundred bullets.' 'These bullets caused us' (the French), said the Adjutant-commandant, De Songeon, 'much trouble. It is very desirable that our engineers should look well into the structure of this new projectile, and make others like them. Our defences were crushed to atoms by a deluge of shells; we could no longer hold out against such formidable artillery. At length we, on our part, tried to make similar shells. Having filled ordinary shells with bullets, we discharged all together, but these missiles did not seem to do much harm.'

Ah, Monsieur l'Adjutant-commandant Songeon, your bullets were all right enough, but you seem to have forgotten the gunpowder; besides, I am not yet satisfied that the fuse was within your competence.

Under one or other modification, every civilised artillery service now avails itself of shrapnel. The modifications of detail are various, but the general principles are ever the same. A thin cast-iron shell, holding balls and intermediate gunpowder, the whole provided with a fuse igniting by flash of the gun's discharge, and timed so as to burn a certain number of seconds or parts of a second—the latter delicacy obtains in Belgium—such is the shrapnel shell, otherwise denominated 'spherical case shot.'

It needs no special acquaintance with military engineering to perceive that the efficiency of shrapnel shells must depend—other points of construction being equal—upon the means at command for insuring their timely bursting; in other words, upon the perfection of their fuses. To illustrate this proposition, let the reader fancy himself sitting upon a barrel of gunpowder. The barrel has a little hole in it. The unlighted extremity of a tallow candle is stuck through that hole, and the other end of the candle is burning. Assuming that the candle is of the proper length to burn six hours, it appears that the expectant reader may sit tranquilly and fearlessly upon the powder-barrel for the space of five hours, three quarters, and something more—how much more, I should not like to say, remembering that errors of some minutes at least may occur in candle-making. Now, the candle stands aptly enough as the representative of a shell-fuse. As to construction, a shell-fuse differs from a candle in this, that whereas the latter is composed of tallow surrounding a combustible wick, the former is, in most varieties of it, at least, a column of burning composition, hard rammed into a wooden or metallic tube. Our illustrative tallow-candle has been assumed capable of burning for six hours exactly; in which case, one-half of the same tallow-candle would occupy precisely three hours burning; and so on proportionately for any fractional time whatever. Such is theory; but when it comes to practice, who is to halve the candle, so as to satisfy the conditions of theory exactly? Here would be the difficulty, and here *is* the difficulty in timing a *time*-fuse. It is easy to take a wooden or metallic tube, rammed full of composition, to divide it into equal longitudinal spaces, by compass marks, to decree that one space shall correspond with one second, half a space to half a second, and so on to the end. To mark, is easy enough, but will the test of burning verify the marking? To insure such verification is the point aimed at in the construction of every variety of time-fuse. There is yet another source of imperfection to which all varieties of time-fuse, save one, are liable; a source that would have hardly been suspected, but which, when pointed out, becomes perfectly comprehensible. A tubular time-fuse is almost the exact representative of a boy's blue light; except that the latter is rammed in a paper case, and the former into a wooden one. How, then, does a boy make his blue light? Why, he puts in one scoopful of composition, and rams; another scoopful, and rams again; and so on until the whole tube is filled. Conditions being thus, it follows that the column of combustible matter, however carefully impacted, is not—*cannot* be equally hard throughout. The hardest, most slowly-burning part will be that nearest to the face of the rammer. 'There cannot be much difference,' you say. Granted, but that is not in question. A difference of half a second one way or the other may determine whether the weapon shall be a missile to scatter death about, or a fireball to be laughed at. At the end of one half second, it would have burst in advance of a square or column, hurtling its death-strokes forward amongst the bodies of men; another half second, and the shell would have sped on, bursting and distributing its bullets into the air; a harmless pyrotechnic ball.

I shrink aghast from the task of committing to paper the pretty little complexities which obtain in the many varieties of shell-fuse. Since the time when Shrapnel conducted his experiments, the simple idea of a blue-light fuse—as one may call it—a simple tube stuffed with composition hard rammed and cut into, or bored, at a certain point to regulate the time of burning, has gone quite out of vogue for shrapnel shells; although in the case of bomb-shells, the contrivance is found to be delicate enough. Our friends in France employ a shrapnel-fuse provided with three columns of composition, timed respectively to 300, 500, and 800 mètres, and capable of no modification. Either column can be ignited at pleasure by tearing away a corresponding cap, which exposes the fuse composition to the flash of gun discharge. This is simplicity itself, and many competent authorities there are who believe the scheme to be no less efficient than simple. Shrapnel shell, according to the French system, can be fired with the rapidity of ordinary round-shot. The fuse adopted by our artillery is more complex. In it, the timing can be accomplished, theoretically at least, from one second up to nine. It is done by pricking through a little hole established close to each second mark. This requires to be done before the fuse is stuck into the shell, which of course involves expenditure of time.

Of all the varieties of shrapnel-fuse yet devised, the one invented by Major-General Bormann, of the Belgian service, is certainly the most ingenious. Fancy a piece of pewter gas-pipe, pressed square, filled with combustible matter, and bent round to a circle, and we have a general notion of the Bormann fuse. The most philosophic point connected with the instrument, however, is this: the gas-tube pressed square is no longer rammed in the direction of its axis, like ordinary fuses and boys' blue lights, but one side of the metallic channel being cut open, the composition is pressed in laterally, by which ingenious contrivance Bormann insures that every portion of the composition in one of his fuses is rammed equally hard in the direction of its axis. The bending of the metallic column into the circular form is only a matter of convenience, enabling the fuse to be fixed within the eye of the shell. Bormann's shrapnels, I should here remark, are delivered on the field of battle with fuses already attached to them. The fuse composition being impacted in the manner described, let us now fancy a metallic covering to be closed down hermetically, and, in all essential particulars, we may imagine a Bormann fuse made. To time the burning of a Bormann fuse—theoretically—is a very simple matter. A chisel-mark being cut down through the metallic lid, the composition is there exposed to the flash of the gun, and is ignited at that point. On two surfaces, one on either side of the chisel-slit, the fuse composition begins to burn; combustion proceeding in opposite directions round the circle, until the fire on either side comes in contact with an intervening stop. One end of the composition next to the stop is a mere blind end, going nowhere, and accomplishing nothing; whereas at the other end there is a means of communication with the shell within. What follows is evident. If practice keeps pace with intention, the shell blows up, scattering its bullets after the ordinary manner of shrapnel shells.

If some highly patriotic Briton has followed me thus far without comprehending the outline just given of the Bormann fuse, and has whispered to himself: 'A complex foreign invention this; I'll none of it'—the writer would seriously counsel him to try back and master what has already been told him, if he desire to be let into the secret of the celebrated Armstrong fuse. The Armstrong fuse, in point of fact, is nothing more or less than a Bormann time-fuse, to which a Moorsom concussion fuse is superadded; which announcement being made, I solicit the patriotic Briton's best attention while I describe the principle of the Moorsom fuse.

Notwithstanding the mystery in which war-engines and all belonging to them are enshrouded, those mysterious death-dealers are, after all, the result of the application of first principles, aided by common sense. At a glance, for instance, it will be perceived that the whole efficiency of a shrapnel shell depends upon its bursting some little distance in advance of the object aimed at. Equally obvious is it that every variety of shell not having the function of a mine, will be expected to blow up *after* reaching its object. Naval shells, for example, now commonly employed in war-ship armaments, are expected to burst, as near as may be, at the instant of touching an adverse ship. This being so, the question arises, whether it be not possible to adapt a sort of fuse, not depending upon the burning of a column of composition at all: whether something on the principle of a percussion-cap on a gun-nipple cannot be employed? Even the boys of our streets might have set gunners a thinking. A refinement of peg-top sport has come in of late. Often does one see a percussion-cap stuck fast to the iron peg, so that when the top comes down upon the ground, the cap explodes. Does not this suggest a hint to gunners? Is it not possible, in plain language, to make a shell with percussion appendage? A percussion appendage involves the means of insuring the striking of one particular end of the projectile, which involves in its turn the rifle gun. Rifled small-arms lend themselves to the percussion-shell system admirably. There is no difficulty whatever with them as Colonel Jacob, Captain Norton, and others, have demonstrated. With rifled cannon, there *are* difficulties. The shock of discharge is apt to ignite the shell prematurely. Altogether, the direct percussion system holds out but little hope of success, even when rifled artillery are concerned. Nor is it needed. The concussion system is in all respects better, and is one, moreover, which equally accords with rifled or non-rifled artillery. Many of us read, or heard, during the progress of the Russian war, about the percussion shell of Captain Moorsom, or rather about that gentleman's concussion-fuse. The principle of Moorsom's fuse is this: fancy a steel hammer suspended in a metallic tube, by means of a wire passing through a hole drilled through the hammer, and attached to either side of the tube internally. Fancy that wire-threaded hammer threatening to strike a patch of fulminating powder, but unable to strike because of the restraining wire. Fancy, now, that the shock of firing comes, breaks the wire, and breaking it, loosens the hammer. Whilst the shell hurtles in its death-curve through the air, the hammer does not strike; but when the final shock of impact comes, down goes the hammer upon the composition; the patch explodes, and the shell bursts. Such is the principle on which the Moorsom fuse is constructed. The breaking of the wire and liberation of the hammer may be aptly compared to the setting of a gun-lock from half-cock to full-cock. Thus, indeed, Sir William Armstrong expressed himself, and the form of expression was happy.

Come we now to the Armstrong fuse. It is an ingenious combination of Moorsom's with Bormann's; both modified. The Belgian fuse, as will be remembered, is a time-fuse, which ignites by flash of discharge. Now, Armstrong's shell is so long, and, moreover, its fuse or front end is so far away from the gunpowder charge, that ignition by the latter could not be depended upon. Armstrong therefore accomplished his object by superadding to the Belgian contrivance a modified Moorsom—modified, that is to say, in the way of causing the breakage of restraining wire and liberation of hammer, to ignite the time-fuse. Within each of Armstrong's shells is a second fuse—a real Moorsom—the object of which is to explode the shell by concussion, should by any chance the time-fuse fail.

It is useless for interested people to try to persuade the world that Armstrong's fuse is a dead secret. The patent commissioners know better. It is published in a patent specification, drawings and all. But the shell—the shell! that, at least, is a dead secret, say you. The Armstrong shell, at least, has never been turned inside-out. Armstrong did not patent that; government would not let him. Still, the ghosts of dead secrets will out; and, as the writer believes that the less exclusively secret a weapon of war becomes, the more will nations be bound to keep the peace, one with another, he sees no reason why he may not instruct the inquisitive reader.

How to make an Armstrong Shell. — 1. Take a champagne bottle—but your champagne bottle must be of cast-iron—cut off the bottom of it, also the neck; you will then have made a sort of elongated bell. 2. Take twelve flat iron rings, each just fitting the interior of the bell, and each ring so thick that, when twelve are inserted side to side, they shall fill the bell up to the neck. 3. Cut each ring into four, and pack them; you will then have forty-eight separate pieces of iron. 4. Take a cast-iron shoe or slab, turned up at the edge, into which the bell-end may fit; drop the bell-end into it. 5. Cast a thin layer of lead round the whole, and your shell is made. 6. Charge it by pouring gunpowder into the cylindrical space comprehended within the interior of the rings. 7. Attach the fuse, and your shell is complete.

'My shell,' said Sir William Armstrong on a recent occasion, 'breaks up into forty-nine regular parts, besides irregular ones.' Twelve rings, each divided into four parts, make forty-eight; the iron shoe makes forty-nine. *Verb. sap. sat.*

A LEAF FROM A BLUE-BOOK.

The Perfecly Surtins are a great family, and doubtless came over before the Conqueror. Possessing, as they do, a sort of divine impulse, whereby they are enabled to arrive at truth by a shorter method than the rest of mankind, it is no wonder that their speech is, for the most part, oracular and decisive. Baron Neverrong, the present head of their House, although not a member of Her Majesty's Government, has always more accurate information concerning continental politics than the Foreign Minister himself. That less-gifted functionary is often obliged to be content with having 'good reason to believe' that this or that will be the case; the Baron *knows* that the direct contrary will happen, as surely as that he has the honour of sitting in their Lordships' presence.

The Hon. and Rev. Perfecly Surtin, his brother, should have been born, by rights, the Pope of Rome, instead of a Cathedral canon, inasmuch as he is infallible upon all religious matters, from the duration of future punishment to the precise syllable at which the officiating clergyman should turn from West to East, or *vice versâ.*

Lieutenant-colonel Surtin of the Horse Guards

Red is so crammed with military 'facts, sir, facts,' that to interrupt, we do not say to contradict him in any statement, is to retard, as it were, his mental circulation, and induce premonitory symptoms of apoplexy. 'Heavens! has he been in the service five-and-thirty years, to have his views disputed upon the probability of a war with the French!' He is one of the Morethen Surtins—the Buckinghamshire branch—who have for so many generations predicted from their place in parliament the total and irremediable ruin of this country, with the exact dates of that yet unfulfilled occurrence. It was a Morethen Surtin who, early in this present century, was the author of that celebrated paper in the *Edinburgh*, which, by demonstrating the impossibility of crossing the Atlantic in a steam-vessel, established his reputation. This portion of the family, having been very prolific, are not in flourishing circumstances, and have been obliged in many cases to take to journalism. The name of Morethen Surtin, indeed, is, or ought to be, a household word to all newspaper editors. The whole race, however, must admit, we think, that its special characteristics have been most highly manifested—not to say exaggerated—in its females; none of whom, whether married or single, or rich or poor, or noble or simple, has been ever known to forget herself in the respect of losing sight of her lineage. 'Once Surtin always Surtin,' is the family motto; and Lady Neverrong, who gives Mede-and-Persian laws to half Belgravia, is not more beyond the reach of error in her statements than is Mrs Poz of Singleton's Alley—'pretty Surtin' that was, as they used to call her, the little ballet-girl who married the theatrical tailor. Should any one deny this, we would at once transport him to the nearest police-court—not that we are like the autocratic Colonel Surtin, who would have him condignly punished for the contradiction—but simply in order that he might be convinced of what we assert. Therein, or in the law-courts, at any business-hour of the day, is almost sure to be found one of the female Surtins in the witness-box, offering up her evidence with a will, as though it were some acceptable incense of which the magistrate could not have too much, and even volunteering, in her enthusiasm, much information which is *not* evidence. Her voluminous statement being at last concluded, the counsel for the other side rises to put a few questions to her in cross-examination. Did she, Mrs Timothy Shure (daughter of old Surtin the coachmaker in Long Acre), mean to persist in stating that the accused person did of her own knowledge sign the document in question?

'Yes, she did; might she never say another word in this world (an imprecation the terrible nature of which can only be estimated by those who know Mrs Shure well), if he didn't write'——

'Stop, my good woman; not so fast,' interposes her persecutor: 'we don't want to know anything about his *writing*. Are you prepared to state that this man, in danger of his life here, did actually *sign* this paper?'

'Yes, sir,' replies the lady, hurriedly; 'he wrote—that is, he had his back to me'——

'You have deliberately sworn, madam, that *of your own knowledge* this person'——

'Yes, sir, please, sir (hysterically), it was this way you see, sir; he *did* sign it; *everybody knows* he signed it; I'll *swear* he signed it—but I *wasn't exactly in the room* myself, sir,' &c. &c. Finally, the cross-examination ends with Mrs Shure casting up her hands in the box, calling upon Heaven to witness that she is the daughter of a most respectable tradesman, and begging 'Mr Judge' to have mercy upon her, for she never meant to hurt a flea. Nor did she. We know the Surtin family so well that we at once acquit her of all design of committing an injustice; and the worst we have to say of them here is, that the evidence of any one of them should be received with caution, and when more than commonly positive and decisive, should not be received at all.

We have been led into these remarks by some late Reports of the Postmaster-general, who appears—though, of course, by deputy—to have been worried by the Perfecly Surtins beyond endurance. We are by no means friendly to Circumlocution Offices, and are of opinion that government officials in general are like walnut-trees and spaniels, in respect that 'the more they be beaten the better they be;' but the Post-office is an institution quite exceptional in its continuous efforts to promote the public convenience, and deserves quite different treatment at all hands. During our own literary life, we have addressed as many letters and manuscripts as most people—and it must be confessed in a far worse than average handwriting—through a good number of the 11,101 post-offices of this United Kingdom, without so much as one of them going astray; and those who have corresponded with us have been equally fortunate. We believe that this is also the general experience, except only among two classes of persons: the first of which persist in putting money into their letters, in contempt of a system of money-orders expressly devised for their convenience; and the second of which are the Perfecly Surtins themselves. The amount of Unfounded Complaints laid against her Majesty's Post-office every year by this unhesitating family must be something enormous, since these Reports profess only to give the cream of them. During the space of one year, no less than eight thousand of this race—who had, with their own hands, posted certain letters, and whose responsibility, as they averred, was therefore entirely shifted on to the official shoulder—were driven frantic on account of the non-delivery of their missives; and why? Simply because they had not taken the precaution of putting *any address* on their envelopes! One of these blank covers enclosed a sum of more than L.4000, which was afterwards safely returned through the Dead-letter Office.

This family seems to boast of a great number of men of business amongst its scions, who, being so more than convinced about the facts of every transaction, are perpetually 'putting the law in motion,' and endeavouring to set the Postmaster-general by the heels in jail, for offences which they themselves, or their own servants, have committed. A bank-agent sends his youthful son to the Post to receive for him some very valuable enclosures, who obtains them in due course, but immediately afterwards leaves town for the holidays, and carries the missive—some L.1500 or so—away in his pocket; where it remains consorting with marbles, Everton toffy, half-pence, and cold Bologna sausage, till the end of the vacation. Again.

'A merchant sent his errand-boy to post a letter, and to purchase a stamp to put upon it. The letter contained negotiable bills amounting to L.1200, and as the merchant did not receive an acknowledgment from his correspondent, he cast the blame on the Post-office. An inquiry followed, which resulted in shewing that the errand-boy had met another boy on a similar mission, who undertook to post the letter in question. On further reflection, however, the latter resolved to convert the penny intended for a postage-stamp into sweetmeats, which he did, and then destroyed the letter with its contents, carrying the fragments into a field near the Post-office, where they were found hidden.'

A third example of the folly of trusting boys to post letters of great importance occurred only last year in Glasgow.

'In May last, it was stated that a letter, addressed to a bank in Glasgow, had been delivered without its contents—halves of bank-notes for L.75—and, on a strict investigation, it appeared that the letter had been intrusted to a boy to post, who confessed that, being aware the letter contained money, and finding that the wafer with which it was fastened was wet, he had been tempted to steal the contents, which, at the time, he believed to be whole notes; but who added, that when, on afterwards examining them, he found them to be halves only, he enclosed them in an unfastened sheet of paper, which he directed according, as he believed, to the address of the letter from which he had taken them. The halves of the notes and sheet of paper were subsequently discovered in the Glasgow Post-office; the address on the paper being, however, very different from that of the letter in which the notes had been enclosed.'

Public attention has been frequently called to the inconvenience which arises from sealing letters which are to be closely packed for any time with wax, and especially if they are likely to be exposed to heat. One of the Perfecly Surtins—Irish branch—disregarding this warning with characteristic contempt, sends a money-letter to Kingston, which is not received till months after it is posted.

'Why is this, ye good-for-nothing officials?' roars this gentleman. 'Give me my money back, ye Saxon Rapparees!'

Whereas the delay arises from the Milesian's waxed letter having adhered to another, and performed a superfluous voyage to Nova Scotia and back.

It is only very rarely that any member of the Surtin family is found to offer an apology for the trouble which his own stupidity or carelessness has occasioned, but the late Lord Chancellor Cranworth is one honourable exception to the rule. *He* was exceedingly positive that a letter of importance, posted to his address, had never reached him; *he* made 'a precious row'—as a Lord Chancellor might be expected to do—about his wrong; and made up his mind, we do not doubt, that if Mr Rowland Hill should ever come before him, in his judicial capacity, he should have the best that the law could give him; yet here is his subsequent apology to the Secretary of the Post-office:

'I feel it a duty to you, sir, and to the Post-office authorities, to say that I have just found the missing letter, which has been accidentally buried under a heap of other papers. I have only to regret the trouble which my oversight thus caused, and to take the earliest opportunity of absolving all persons, except myself, of blame in the matter.—Cranworth.'

One of the Rev. Perfecly Surtins—an Oxford divine—finds his missing letter between the cushions of his own arm-chair; another discovers his between those of his carriage; a third member of the family—Scotch branch—residing at Kirkcudbright, demands justice to his down-trodden country and himself upon the ground of having never received a communication, which he left upon a table overnight, and probably over toddy, where it was *devoured by rats;* a fourth has a 'treasure of a servant,' who, acting upon the false idea that every box marked 'Letters' is a post-office, considerably delays his master's missives; and a fifth has another treasure (whose honesty can of course be sworn to), who always opens the envelopes intrusted to him, and in case of their being worth his acceptance, abstracts their contents. The following is a case wherein it is likely the Perfecly Surtins must have greatly distinguished themselves:

'A letter supposed to contain a L.10 note was registered at Moffat, and in due course delivered to the addressee, who, however, declined to sign a receipt for it, as the L.10 note was missing. The sender was written to, but he asserted that the note had been enclosed. The postmaster chiefly concerned—who had been more than fifty years in the service—was greatly distressed at the doubt thus cast on his honesty; but on further inquiry, the sender admitted "that he had obtained a trace of the L.10 note," and stated that "the fault had not been with the Post-office." On being pressed for fuller explanation, he stated that, when writing his letter, he had placed the L.10 note in an envelope, and affixed a postage-stamp thereon, when a lady came hurriedly into his shop also to write a letter; that he had assisted her by getting an envelope and placing a postage-stamp on it; that he had placed this envelope beside that which contained the bank-note; and that when the lady had finished her letter, he gave her by mistake the envelope with the L.10 note in it, and put his own letter into the empty envelope. He had carried the two letters to the Post-office; and his own, which he supposed contained the L.10, he had registered. Both letters were safely delivered; and the L.10 having been returned, as evidently sent in error, the lady who had forwarded it brought it to the complainant, and thus the mystery was cleared up.'

Perhaps, however, the most singular case in these latest records of the Post-office is culled from that garden of romance, a finishing Seminary for young Ladies:

'In the spring of last year, a young lady about fifteen years of age, whose parents reside at a small town in ——shire, was sent to a school not far from ——. The mother of the young lady was suffering from illness in April last, and letters were written from time to time to the daughter at school, announcing the state of her mother's health. The young lady declared that she wrote on the 17th of April to inquire how her mother was; that letter was not delivered; and that, on the morning of the 19th of that month, a brown-paper parcel was placed in a very mysterious manner in the hall of the house at which the young lady was at school. This parcel contained a letter, which stated that her mother was dead, and that the parcel had been conveyed by a friend, which accounted for its not bearing any post-marks. Other circumstances were related by the young lady, such as her having seen a man galloping on the road, who halted, and informed her that he had left the parcel announcing her mother's death. On the 21st of the same month, a letter, enclosed in an envelope, was posted at the town in ——shire, informing the young lady that her mother was much better; but when the envelope was opened, the young lady produced another letter, requiring her immediate presence to attend her mother's funeral. The case excited great interest, and suspicion arose that a conspiracy existed, aided by some person in the service of this department, to carry off the young lady. The papers on the subject were referred, in the first instance, to the Surveyor of the Home District, but he was unable to solve the mystery; and the Surveyor of the Western District, to whom the papers were subsequently sent, was equally unsuccessful. At length the solicitor to the Post-office suggested that Mr Christopher Hodgson, an officer attached to the Home District, who had displayed considerable skill in investigating matters of this nature, should be despatched to the school to make further inquiry. This was done; and on a full examination, Mr Hodgson reported it as his opinion that the whole proceedings were but a plot of a school-girl to get home, as its contriver afterwards confessed to be the case.'

We cannot but fear that that investigatory journey to —— about Miss ——'s letters must have caused this country something which can scarcely be represented by ——. A valuable lesson, however, is at least to be derived from that and all the other elucidations upon the folly of being too sure; and we trust that the great family of Perfecly Surtins may be induced to lay it to heart.

MRS WILLIAMS.

It is just forty-five years since my education was finished at Mrs Middleton's seminary for young ladies, the most genteel school in our part of Hampshire, where we learned reading, writing, and needlework, polite behaviour, and the country dances. I was seventeen, and the eldest of ten children. My father's farm was but a small one, held on lease from our rich neighbour, Farmer Dickson, the principal man in our parish after the squire. He had two farms leased from him besides my father's, and a large one which he tilled himself, kept a retinue of men and maids, did the best ploughing, turned out the finest cattle, and made a vast deal of money by his dairy. His wife had died before I was born, and his house was kept in prime order by the youngest of his aunts, Miss Millwood. He had neither son nor daughter but Master Harry, whom everybody thought a sensible, handsome young man, and not half so purse-proud as his father. Being our landlord and next neighbour, Farmer Dickson took a great interest in us. He said the family was too large for my father and mother to manage without advice; but providing for them was their chief difficulty; and when they heard that a distant relation of his, Mrs Williams of the Golden Sheaf, wanted a well-brought-up girl, not as a servant, but to help in the housekeeping, they thought it might be a good situation for me.

To tell the whole truth, there was another reason for my going. Before I left school, Harry Dickson had begun to pay me attentions; not that I encouraged him much, but he would come after me, and it did not please his father. The old man thought his son should look higher than a poor farmer's daughter; and my parents, having a good bit of pride, were just as angry when they came to know it. My father said he hoped no daughter of his would ever tempt a young man to disobey his father. My mother said she hoped I had more spirit than to wish to marry into a family who did not think us good enough for them. Of course, my father and mother were right. I gave Harry back his ring, but it was after a good deal of crying. He swore he would never marry another woman, though his father should disinherit him; and to let Farmer Dickson and the whole country see that we were not set on trapping his son, it was settled that I should go to Mrs Williams.

My father went one day to consult her, and when all was agreed, he took me and my trunk respectably in the London coach, which then passed through Clatford, our village, and stopped at the Golden Sheaf. For a country inn, the house was large and handsome. It had every convenience of yard and stabling, a good garden, a fine orchard, and some hundred acres of corn and meadow land. It was situated on the high road where Surrey and Hampshire meet. The ground was high; and from its upper windows one could see many a mile along the road and over the country. Stage-coaches and carriers' wagons stopped there; so did the county hunts and the travelling gentry, corn and cattle dealers on their way to London, farmers to and from the market-towns; and all who came or went, spoke well of the good housekeeping, the fair-dealing, and the general civility of Mrs Williams.

She was a tall thin woman, upright, active, and still handsome, though bordering on sixty. Her black hair was but thinly sprinkled with gray. She had a good deal of the gentlewoman in her manner; always wore a black tabinet gown, a tamboured apron, and a cap of Nottingham lace, which was fine enough in those times. But there was something in her look so stern and rigid that it made one careful of one's doings before her. Her story, which we had heard in private from Farmer Dickson, was both sad and singular. She had been brought up in a respectable country inn of the county Cornwall, and married a rich farmer. He left her early a widow, with an only daughter. She managed the farm well, however, and was a prosperous woman. Her daughter grew up a beautiful girl, and the mother's heart was wrapped up in her; but the son and heir of a neighbouring squire induced her to elope with him, and marriage into his high family was not to be thought of. Mrs Williams was a woman of a high spirit, strict and proud. It was said the poor girl never dared let it be known where she lived, for fear of her mother; and the squire's son remained abroad. But the old woman would not stand the disgrace; she sold house and farm, left that part of the country, bought the Golden Sheaf, and set herself up where nobody knew her family or history: she had been doing well for many a year.

Stern as she looked, Mrs Williams was kind to me, and I did my best to please her. There was a good deal of novelty and life to be seen about the inn. I soon got over the parting with my mother and sisters, and was trying hard to think no more of Harry, though I had made up my mind—minds are so easily made up at seventeen—to live unmarried for his sake. Thus the summer wore away, the harvest passed, and the short dull days of November came on. I had got accustomed to the ways of the house. Though good, it was an old one. There was the best kitchen, and the best parlour opening from it; numbers of pantries, closets, and cupboards; and a stair behind the old dresser, leading right up to Mrs Williams's own room. It was over the porch, and had windows on three sides, which gave her a view of all who came or went. Her accounts were kept there, in an old-fashioned oak desk; so were her choice recipes, and she had them for making everything. There was a cupboard set in the thick wall, its door not to be distinguished from the rest of the wainscot, in which Mrs Williams kept the most rare and curious of her stores. I was once permitted to see them, as a great privilege, for she never trusted the key to any hand but her own. There were spices and essences, costly at the time of my story, and not common yet; old china which had been brought by the first of the East India Company's ships; mixtures for taking out stains; powder for destroying moths; and a poison for rats invented long ago by some of the Cornish people, and of such a terrible nature, that if one rat took it, all the rest fled from the place, and never came back. So Mrs Williams told me; but I won't vouch for it; and can only remember now that the poison resembled nothing I ever saw but red pepper, which was an expensive luxury at that time, and kept in the cupboard also. It may be believed that I was in great favour, for not only were her treasures shewn to me, but I had tea with Mrs Williams in the porch-room every evening. She took kindly to me from the first, because I exerted myself to learn housekeeping, which my mother often said was the principal thing for a young woman expecting to have a house of her own, and still more because I kept quiet and sober, and had no looks of levity. Nothing of that kind would have been allowed at the Golden Sheaf, inn though it was, the house being kept with the greatest propriety. There were no jokes, and very little gossiping; plenty of work, for almost everything was made at home, and a great deal of coming and going. Our quietest time was about the beginning of November, just before the winter fairs began. Then Mrs Williams got her cattle killed, and her meat salted, and most of the servants were busy about that work in the yard and buttery.

One close, cloudy day, such as comes so often at the Martinmas-time, I was sitting in the best kitchen close by the window, doing some needlework, and Mrs Williams was up in her own room settling the accounts, for it was Monday, and early in the afternoon. The sound of a horse's hoofs on the road made me look out, and there was a gentleman, handsomely mounted, with a servant after him, as gentlemen rode in those days. They looked as if they had travelled far, and were coming to rest at the inn. When the gentleman alighted, I saw he was tall and handsome, somewhere about thirty-five, and had a jovial good-natured look, like one who was well pleased with himself and everything about him. He walked in not at all strange like, and asked me in the most civil and courteous manner if Mrs Williams lived here, and if he and his servant could have dinner. The first question was asked in a low tone, the second in a louder key; and before I could answer it, Mrs Williams came down. Judging from her look, he was quite a new customer. I thought the gentleman glanced curiously at her at first, and then seeming satisfied that all was right, repeated his question about the dinner, saying he was a stranger in that part of the country, but he had heard so much of the Golden Sheaf, that he wished to stop and dine at the house.

I never saw Mrs Williams receive any gentleman with more respect and ceremony. She courtesied him into the best parlour, called the hostlers to help his servant with the horses, took his orders for dinner, and set about cooking it herself, for the cook was hard at work making black and white puddings in the buttery. My first notion was that she had discovered him to be some great person travelling in disguise, and I half expected to be told of it. Mrs Williams used to talk to me a good deal when we were alone in quiet afternoons; but now she went on cooking and making things ready without saying a word, and there was a queer fixed look in her face which I could not understand, but it kept me from talking. I laid down my work, and rose to make the eel-soup; it was one of the things for which the house was famous—a Cornwall dish, I believe; and I had been trusted with the making of it of late, to my great exultation. But now she stopped me. 'No, Mary; finish your sewing: those linens will be wanted. I'll make the soup myself.'

I sewed away, wondering who the gentleman could be, and what had come over Mrs Williams, till happening to look up, I missed her out of the kitchen. She had gone up to her own room, but came back in a minute with a paper in her hand, which she shook into the soup, and then threw into the fire.

'That's the red pepper; it will do now,' said she, taking up a spoonful, and making-believe to taste it, but she did not. I stitched on for a minute or two, though my blood was running cold; and the boiling of that soup in the large quiet kitchen sounds through my head sometimes even now. Mrs Williams was standing at the window with her back to me. I never will know what made me do it; but it was as if somebody had bidden me; and without a word or a thought but that it must be done, I ran to the fire, gave the sauce-pan a poke, and sent the soup blazing up the chimney. As it fizzed up, the thought of her anger came over me. I knew not what I did; but uttering a wild cry of fear, I rushed to the nearest door, and it was the best parlour. The next thing I remember is crouching behind the gentleman, who had started up and stood in the door, as Mrs Williams came forward with two knives, which had been lying on the window-sill, in her hand.

'Pooh, never mind the spilling of the soup,' said he, understanding at once what I had done, which indeed was easily seen. 'You would not be angry with the child for that; she could not help it, I dare say. I can dine very well without it. You don't know me, Mrs Williams,' he continued, coming a step nearer where she stood, still looking at me with a deadly glitter in her eyes.

'Don't I,' said she, and I did think she was trying which of the knives was the sharpest.

'Well,' said the gentleman, 'you may know me to be Edward Winstanley; but you don't know that I have married your daughter, and brought her home a lady. I never meant to act the villain by her. We were privately married; but while the old man lived, it had to be kept a secret, and we knew you would not keep it. That is why I have come to-day to surprise you; but you will come to Winstanley Park, and give us your blessing. By Jove, ma'am, you're not going to faint!' She had staggered back against the wall, her white lips set, and her eyes growing glassy. He and I, and half-a-dozen of the servants, whom my scream had brought in, ran to help her; but she pushed us away with a desperate effort, darted up stairs, and we heard her lock herself in her own room. The whole house was terribly frightened; the maids all concluding that Mrs Williams had seen a ghost. What Mr Winstanley thought, I do not know, but he asked me no questions, and never seemed to suspect anything about the spilled soup. He left a note for Mrs Williams, and went off with the servant a little before sunset. We all went about our business, for work never slacked in that house on any account, and the evening coach was expected. Just before it came, Mrs Williams's bell rang, and the housemaid said she wanted me. When I came into the room, she was sitting at the desk, looking herself again; but her face was still white, and she had her long knitted purse full of guineas in her hand.

'Mary,' said she, 'you are a good girl; take this and go home; I'll take care that you get no blame.'

'I want no money, ma'am,' said I; 'but I'll go home if you let me, and never say a word except to my father or mother.'

She held out the purse once more, and then pointed to the door, but could say nothing; it must have been a hard pull for her proud spirit. I got out of the room as quick as I could, threw on my hat and cloak, and got into the coach as soon as it came up, leaving trunk and all behind me.

My father and mother were mightily surprised when it set me down at their door in Clatford, just as the clock struck twelve; they were still more astonished when I told them what had brought me home. My father first called me a brave good girl, and then advised me not to be proud about it, because it was the work of Providence, and we were bound on all hands to keep such a story quiet about Farmer Dickson's relation. The story was kept between me and them; but my home-coming got wind, and Farmer Dickson came in a great fluster to know why Mary had left her good situation. My mother would not have reflections cast on her child, so she told him in the parlour; and what he said I don't know, because the door was fast shut; but he came out rubbing his hands, and clapped me on the back, saying:

'By jing, you are a fine girl, Mary; and if Harry don't finish that business, I'll ask you to be Mrs Dickson myself.'

I think I have not much more to tell. Harry did finish the business. There were some people in our village that never got over the wonder of it; but I am proud to say the Dickson family did not lose by me, for ten years after, Mrs Williams died in her own inn, and left her whole property in equal shares between me and her daughter, Lady Winstanley. She had never gone to the Park but once, and then she would neither eat, drink, nor sleep in the house, but saw her daughter, and her grandson, now heir of the estate, and then went straight back to the

Golden Sheaf. She never took another girl to stay with her; and what she said about my leaving, I never heard; but the maids had a story among them, and they always stuck to it, that I went on account of something terrible which came down the chimney, and frightened Mrs Williams half out of her senses. They said one thing, however, which I am inclined to think might be true, that she never liked to make eel-soup after, nor cared to look at red pepper.

A FEW GREEN PATRIARCHS.

We gave some facts, a few months ago, on the uses of our common English herbs, but they were chiefly facts of bygone times, when the east was still the land of myth and mystery, and America had only savages for her denizens, and a few high-ruffed adventurers as the claimants of a world they neither knew nor held. Since then—since old Gérarde discoursed on the virtues of simples to the elderly Maiden Queen, and John Tradescant gardened for the Merry Monarch, and gave his name to the long-legged spiderworts—a vast revolution has been made in the hierarchy of plants. Many which were then held supremely necessary for the wellbeing of man, and venerated as herbs of healing power, have now passed down to the ranks of worthless weeds, only bequeathing their generic name as the titular designation of the whole family. And what families! Growths of which neither Gérarde nor Culpepper, neither Tradescant the Elder nor Tradescant the Younger ever dreamed, are now, by the Natural System, banded together under one heading; and herbs which Linnæus thought wide as the poles asunder, are introduced to us as all of a tribe, and in common brotherhood with outlandish members which no one ever heard of in the days of England's typical glory. We will take one—the nettle-tribe, or *Urticaceæ*.

In those good old times, which every one regrets in sentiment, and rejoices to have escaped in heart, nettle-tops did duty for our modern asparagus, and nettle-tea was drunk while Chinese bohea was unknown; and both were pronounced good by the benighted old *gourmets* who found a full savour of rich meaning for their loving cups in the blue flowers of the borage, and made spinach of Good-king-Henry, and a most detestable sauce of Jack-by-the-hedge. Who, then, would have thought that not only would that 'wicked weed,' the hop, so cursed by Harry VI., be one day ranked as of the nettle-tribe, but that hemp and figs, fustic-wood and mulberries, the bread-fruit of the South-sea Islands and the jack-fruit, the upas of Java, the banyan of India, the hya-hya, palo di vaca, or cow-tree of Demerara (though some do say that this be a dog's tooth, and no nettle after all), and the caoutchouc trees of America, should all be introduced into these dominions, and classed as kinsmen with the rough-leaved herb, then principally regarded as a sovereign remedy against scurvy, gout, jaundice, and hæmorrhage! If our forefathers had heard of nettle-trees which gave bread, and milk, and paper, which last should be also a capital substitute for cotton-cloth; if they could have known that the luscious purple figs, which only thrones and principalities might taste and enjoy, and the black ripe mulberries which lost their purity if touched, though never so lightly, were to be classed as of the same family with the roadside nettle, they would assuredly have cropped the ears of the propounder of these two mysteries—one ear for lies, and the other for slander. Sir Walter Raleigh and Bruce were both called liars for less wonderful tales than these.

The nettle tribe is very valuable, and the common nettle itself has many more available uses than one would imagine. Its seeds are good for the *goître*; its stings are good for paralysis. Here, in Scotland, nettle-cloth is by no means uncommon, and is exceedingly durable and beautiful; while Germany calls her muslin still *Nesseltuch* (nettle-cloth), thus betraying its origin; and France makes very passable nettle-paper. Greece stains her Easter eggs green with nettle-dye—for nettle-leaves dye green—and nettle-roots treated with alum give a very fair yellow; and both are still used for the woollen cloths of Wales. Nettle-juice makes a good rennet; and dried nettles are great promoters of cow's milk. In many places in England, indeed, a pint of milk is paid as an equivalent for a day's feed of nettles in April or May; and Russia, Sweden, and Holland cultivate them solely for dairy purposes. In the north of England, young nettle-leaves are given to pigs; and, chopped up fine, they are mixed with the food of all the barn-door poultry, but specially with that of young turkeys, who die if they have no nettles to eat, and die all the same if they wander into a bed of them and are stung. Nettles help to make good hot-beds; and on every thriving strawberry bank, there will they also be, helping to make good land, and of signal service to the fruit. The nettle has another claim to our gratitude, for it nourishes about thirty species of insects; the caterpillars of the peacock butterfly, the red admiral, the tortoise-shell, and that brilliant-winged fluttering jewel, the *Nymphalis gemmatus*, being among them. These are some of the good qualities and gracious offices of our common nettle of the lanes and fields; but the foreign species are even of higher uses.

In Kamtschatka, they make fishing-lines of nettles; and the Hindoo grass-cloth, called *chu ma*, is from a nettle, as is also the Chinese grass-cloth; this last from the snowy nettle (*Bœhmeria nidea*). The bread-fruit tree (*Artocarpus incisifolia*) not only yields a most delicious food, but also gives a beautiful kind of cloth for the South-sea islanders; but the best cloth made from this genus is got from the *Broussonetia papyrifera*, from which the Chinese and Japanese get also an excellent quality of paper. This paper is taken from the outer bark; and in Japan, serves for all sorts of uncommon uses. Curtains, umbrellas, clothes, pocket-handkerchiefs, hats, and other like articles, are made of it, as also a juice used as a glue in the gilding of paper and leather. The nettle of Timor is not quite so beneficent to man. Called *daoun setan*, or the devil's leaf, its sting produces effects which sometimes last for a whole year, and sometimes result in death; and there is no antidote like our dock to our nettle—'nettle in, dock out'—which can be used to allay the smart or draw out the poison. The daoun setan would be no trifle in among our strawberry-beds, or bordering the hedgerows, where the wild-flowers are waiting to be plucked.

Think of our beer without one of the nettle tribe! What should we do now without hops? Yet hops are nettles—'wicked weeds,' in truth, but pleasant wickedness. Ale was originally barley brewed with certain herbs, such as sweet-gale, bog myrtle, ale-hoof, or broom twigs; beer, barley brewed with hops. The novelty raised a storm: all novelties do. 'Hops and heresy came together,' says Dr King; and the weed that was named after a wolf could not, by any possibility, be good for man. *Humulus lupulus* is the botanical name of the hop: the first from the rich soil in which alone it thrives; the second from some fancied connection with those uncomfortable gentlemen the wolves; rendered a little more intelligible by the Welsh name of 'Wolf's swoon.' Ale—that is, malt without hops, but with wormwood instead—is still brewed at All Souls, Oxford, where the college silver ale-cups are called 'ox eyes,' or 'ox eyes of wormwood;' and the Isle of Skye people brew ale of one part malt, and two of heather-tops. The Egyptians flavoured their zythus, or 'barley-wine,' with lupin, skirret, and a certain Assyrian plant, which perhaps came to much the same thing as our malt and hops.

The pea tribe, or *Leguminosæ*, is another most valuable friend to man, comprising a wide range of uses, and a multiplicity of effects. First, we have the pea *par excellence;* marrow fats, Prussian blues, early frames, dwarfs, champions—by what name soever fantastic growers choose to label their special varieties. And then we have beans; both broad beans and kidneys; and the lentils of which Du Barry makes his Revalenta, called by that queen of advertisers, Maria Jolly, and others, 'delicious food.' But these, and the beautiful sweet-pea of our gardens, are not all; for even among our own wild varieties other graces may be found besides those which charm our palates or adorn our houses. And first, though it is of no particular human use, we must say a word about the gorse, that special English glory, which withers in a hot climate and fades in a cold one, and flourishes nowhere on earth with such luxuriant golden prodigality of bloom as in England. Why, it is rare even in the Highlands; and further north still, pales out of sight altogether. Then there is the broom, the genista or greenweed, the 'dwarf men,' or 'golden fruit of the meadows,' which once stood godfather to a royal race, and was a favourite emblem of middle-age chivalry. Prefiguring the advent of the hop, these 'dwarf men' made barley brew into ale; they yet tan leather, thatch cottages, give a sorry imitation of coffee in their seeds, and a very bad substitute for capers in their buds; from their fibres may be got a kind of paper, and a fair cloth; the wood makes a tolerable veneer; and one, the woad waxen, has a speciality for dyeing. It is called the dyer's greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*), and gives a bright yellow colour. The clovers are also Leguminosæ, and vetches and lucerne are their allies; some of the vetchlings are good for cattle; and Highlandmen, suffering hunger, eat the roots of the tuberous bitter vetch, under the name of cormeille. Talking of leguminous roots, those who touch the root of the kidney-bean had better take heed to their ways, for it is almost as dangerous a narcotic as poppy-juice or henbane seeds, for all that the fruit, as a vegetable, is so grateful and delicious.

Passing out of England, we find the pea tribe of infinite value in our modern economy. Gum-arabic comes from an acacia, and the acacias are leguminous; and not only 'the elect,' as the finest kind of gum-arabic is called, but also Barbary gum, gum-Gedda, and gum-Senegal; gum-tragacanth, from the astragalus (chiefly used in stiffening crape); various copals; catechu, cutch or terra japonica, a strong tan, also from an acacia; divi-divi; the seed-pods of *Cæsalpina coriaria*, another tan; ground-nuts, which yield the finest oil known, and are used by watchmakers and the like delicate workmen; kino; soy from the pods of *Soja hispida*, and not from the cockroaches on board ship, as is sometimes believed; the sweet-smelling Tonquin beans, and balsam of Peru. In dyes alone, the tribe would be one of incalculable benefit to man, if nothing else remained. Logwood, or iron-wood, is of this tribe. Logwood was introduced into England in Queen Elizabeth's time; but because the dyers did not at once find the proper mordant, an act was passed 'for abolishing certain deceitful stuffs employed in dyeing cloths;' which act remained in force, and prohibited the use of logwood until 1661, when that small piece of legislative folly got itself abolished, and set at rest. Peach-wood—'Brésil de Ste Martha'—which dyes red and peach colour; Brazil-wood, which dyes rose-colour, red, and yellow; Braziletto-wood, giving fine red and orange-red tones; Japan-wood, which dyes all the red Telinga cottons, but also dyes a brilliant yellow at will; cam-wood and bar-wood, from the first of which we get the red dye of our ordinary bandanas; sanders or red sandal, which yields brownish red, scarlet red, yellow red, and a deep pure crimson; Kessaree flowers, much used in the East Indies for rich orange and yellow dyes, but only a late importation here; and last, and most important of all, indigo, from the *Indigofera tinctoria*—all these are of the Leguminosæ: of the same division in the natural system as that which holds the pretty little bird's-foot trefoil of our sunny banks—'shoes and stockings,' as children call it—and the purple clover of our fragrant meadows. Indigo was known to the ancients, but lost again, till reintroduced by the Dutch in the middle of the sixteenth century. Queen Elizabeth prohibited the use of indigo, as well as of logwood; called it 'food for the devil,' and made its abolition from the dyeing vats a proof both of sound morality and good loyalty. But Charles II. rescinded the absurd decision. Senna comes from one of the same tribe, the cassia; and liquorice is from the large tap-roots of the *Glycyrhiza glabra*. Tamarinds are ranged under the same heading; and so is the carob, or locust-tree, otherwise called St John's Bread, used here only as horses' food, but not despised in the south of Europe, where it grows, when a time of scarcity presses. Sunn or Bengal hemp, and a few other hemps of not first-rate importance, come from the same tribe, which, we think, may be said to be the most varied of any in yields and uses. Even the furniture-woods do not escape. Rosewood is one; purple-wood, or purple heart, another; mora-wood, 'one of the most majestic trees of Guiana,' and above a hundred feet high, darker than mahogany, and as close and tough; East Indian ebony; the light yellow locust-wood; iron-wood and sabine, which last made the stairs of the Crystal Palace of Hyde Park, and at the end of the season shewed no perceptible wear or tear in its dull red colour and close short grain; all these are also of the Leguminosæ, or typical 'pulse' tribe.

The rose stands as nominal chief of a mighty clan; but not many are of strange or foreign growths. They are mostly British, and singularly comprehensive. In the same nominal sheaf are roses and apples, almonds, blackberries, cherries, and lady's mantles, apricots, and the little creeping tormentil, raspberries, cinquefoils, the agrimony, quinces, hawthorn, and salad-burnet, strawberries, pears, and the mountain-ash or rowan, medlars, the meadow-sweet, plums, peaches, Portugal laurels, bullaces, and bird-cherries. This is pretty well for one family, especially when we remember that no additions have been made to it by any of the later discoveries. Roses have always been loved, and by all manner of people. The Greeks loved them, and flung their beauties in lavish epithets over their favourite deities. The Mexicans, too, loved them; and when the Spaniards landed to carry ruin and death among the simple folk who worshipped them as armed gods come up from the sea, they found a goddess called 'the Lifting up of Roses,' whom they swore was the Blessed Virgin in disguise; and they found a legend which set forth how the mother of all living got her first sin by eating roses. With the Persians the rose has been always queen of the garden, and supremest source of poetic inspiration; and the golden rose which the pope is accustomed to bless and send to sundry royal personages, is but an emblem of the 'Rosa Mystica,' as the Litany of the Blessed Virgin calls the mother of Christ. Conserve of roses is still an article of our pharmacopœia, and no one needs to ask of the special virtues to be found in apples, plums, or peaches, which the Natural Systematisers class as *Rosaceæ*, by the side of *potentillas* and the common agrimony. Of almonds, which are also of the rose tribe, it may be as well to say that those which are called Jordan almonds come from Malaga, and have nothing to do with Syria at all. The Jordan almonds are the largest of the three varieties usually imported; with clear and dustless skins, and are seldom seen in the shell. The Valencia almonds are not quite so long as the Jordan, but are broader, and the skin is covered with a fine dust; these are sometimes imported in the shell. The Barbary and Italian almonds are shorter, rounder, and smaller than the others, and most frequently come in their shells.

From the violet tribe, which is not a large one, we get chiefly perfume, and a kind of ipecacuanha; indeed, the roots of the sweet violet are often used to adulterate the genuine ipecacuanha, which some rank as of the quinine tribe. The seeds and roots of sundry water-lilies are sometimes made available for food; and the roots of certain geraniums serve, some for food, and others for medicines. One orchis gives us vanilla, and another salep; the leaves of the willow-herb are mixed with the low-priced teas which advertising shops sell at bargains and sacrifices; and not only broom seeds and chicory—itself adulterated—serve to adulterate that much enduring plant the coffee-tree, but even dandelion roots and the seeds of the yellow water iris are in request for that purpose as well. This iris tribe, by the way, is not very comprehensive, but it gives one or two notable things: it gives us that delicious orris-root which smells like violets, and is employed in almost all perfumes; and it gives us the saffron crocus (*Crocus sativus*), which we use as a colouring matter rather than as a dye, safflower and other things having all but superseded it. The Roman ladies used it to make their hair the proper auburn tint, employing it as a cosmetic also; and, by the aid of alkalies, which change it from its original golden tint, it dyes the Chinese silks their brilliant reds and purples.

Close beside the iris comes the amaryllis, or lily tribe, of which our own daffodil is one of the most beautiful members. Language has been ransacked for names for this darling of the meadows; and even rough, uncouth Cornwall has been sentimental enough to place it under the special protection of St Perpetua. Elsewhere, it is called Lent Lilies, Flocks, Primrose Peerless, Babies' Bells, Welcome Spring, Asphodel (from Affodyle), That which Cometh Early (whence daffodil), St Catherine's Flower, Poor Daughter of St Claire; with other things less pictorial. But the most extraordinary member of the *Amaryllideæ* is the *Agávé Mexicana*, or American aloe, which blossoms once in a hundred years, and gives the famous pulque, of which the city of Mexico alone consumes 11,000,000 of gallons yearly. Pulque is exceedingly loathsome both to smell and taste when old, though brisk and pleasant enough when fresh and young. The *agávé* makes paper and cloth, as well as pulque, and the juice of its leaves is no bad substitute for soap. Men manufacture hats and magnificent cloaks for themselves out of its leaves, and it can be transmuted into a kind of cordage or hemp, called Pité hemp, and sometimes found in the English markets. From myrtles, or *Myrtaceæ*, we get pomegranates, with their flame-coloured blossoms and blood-red fruit. The rind of the tree is used for tanning Morocco leather, and the flowers serve the Moors both for dyeing and for medicine. The guava is one of the Myrtaceæ. Who does not know guava jelly? And cloves, the unexpanded and most beautiful pink blossoms of the clove-tree, are also of the myrtle tribe. So is allspice, tasting like nutmeg, cloves, and cinnamon commingled; so is a certain Malay tea, gathered from the Tree of Long Life; and maté, a kind of Paraguay tea, as well; the blue gum-wood of Australia (*Eucalyptus*), and the iron-heart—the hard and heavy metrosideros.

Coffee, quinine, ipecacuanha, East Indian madder, zebra and tortoise woods, belong to the same tribe—the quinine or *Cinchonaceæ*. Our limes or linden trees give us the best which gardeners use for matting and tying up plants, and which comes chiefly from Russia, though it is made only of the fibres of our own common lime-trees. Jute hemp is also from the lime-tree tribe, and comes to us from India and other places in *gunny*-bags, principally used for sugar and the like; fishing-lines and nets, musical-strings and cordage, are a few more productions from the same group, which, in some of its members, gives edible berries, and in others, bone-like seeds, which are set in gold, and worn as native ornaments. The *Compositæ* are too large for more than a mere catalogue. Dandelion, chicory, thistles, 'windwitch' or 'leap-in-the-field,' Jerusalem artichokes, dahlias, and daisies which people plant as garden-flowers in North America; chamomile and feverfew, not to be rejected by ailing persons; coltsfoot and elecampane, good for feeble chests; and safflower (*Carthamus tinctoria*), which comes to us pressed into cakes, and from which we make rouge and all its abominations, the seeds yielding an oil (Koosum-oil), which forms the basis of most native Indian soaps—these are a few of the more typical of the Compositæ, but these by no means exhaust the series.

The *Umbelliferæ*, again, make a large British family, not much enriched by foreigners, yet not wholly native. Asafœtida, gum-galbanum, used in the preparation of plasters, caraway-seeds and coriander-seeds, dill, anise, cumin, gum-ammoniacum and turmeric, hemlock, carrots, parsnips, and celery, fennel and chervil, angelica, samphire, and pignuts, are some of the principal Umbelliferæ, with a cloud of minor members behind. The *Cruciferæ* have cabbages, turnips, radishes, and cress, rape—whence rape-oil—mustard—whence also mustard-oil—stocks and wall-flowers, shepherd's purse and ladies' smocks. Many of the cabbage tribe contain sulphur, and give out a large quantity of nitrogen gas when decaying, which fact accounts for the filthy smell of 'cabbage-water,' and of the wet, wan, sloppy kail-yard.

From the *Labiatæ* come many of our perfumes. Patchouli, lavender, rosemary—the basis of Hungary water and Eau-de-Cologne, and the herb which gives the Narbonne honey its peculiar flavour; wild-thyme, used in scenting Windsor soap, and which is the special flavour in Hymettan honey; peppermint, whence the oil of the same name, valuable to old ladies when spasmodically inclined; marjoram, basil, and other sweet pot-herbs—all come into the same nominal gathering with the offensive hedge wound-wort and the aromatic but scarcely pleasant ground-ivy. We have abundance of Labiatæ, too, in our green-houses, but none are of any commercial value, or rather of any human or economic value, save those we have enumerated.

REMINISCENCES OF SCOTTISH LIFE AND CHARACTER.*

Under this title, the respected Dean Ramsay of Edinburgh has printed a small volume of a most attractive character. It is his opinion that the peculiarities of his countrymen are now undergoing a rapid change, whether for the better or worse, he does not presume to say; only he holds it as a fact, that the Scottish people are becoming assimilated to the English, and thus losing all those traits which were once attributed to them. So believing, he has been desirous of preserving at least reminiscences of what the Scotch were in his earlier days, and in the old time antecedent to these, and so has set himself to collect anecdotes characteristic of their bygone manners and ideas, which he has here worked up into a most agreeable parlour volume. He treats his subject under a variety of heads, as the Religious Feelings and Observances of the Scotch, their former Habits of Conviviality, their old-fashioned Servants, their peculiar language, phrases, and proverbs, and finally, anecdotes of Scottish wit and humour—for, contrary to the opinions of Charles Lamb and Sidney Smith, he asserts that these are qualities which the Scotch do possess.

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* Edmonston and Douglas, Edinburgh, 1859. It ought to be mentioned that the book has already reached a third edition.

As the latter is a moot-point of some interest, we may as well confine ourselves to it in noticing the Dean's volume. He strongly asserts that there is a connection between the Scotch temperament and *humour*, if not *wit*. There is, he says, among the Scottish peasantry, a humour 'sly, cheery, and pawky,' but depending much on the quaint dialect in which it is clothed, or on the *Scottishness* of the circumstances involved.

'A facetious friend of mine,' says the Dean, 'who rather leans to the Sidney Smith view of Scottish wit, declares that all our humorous stories are about lairds, and about lairds who are drunk. Of such stories there are certainly not a few. One of the best belonged to my part of the country, and to many persons I should perhaps apologise for introducing it at all. The story has been told of various parties and localities, but no doubt the genuine laird was a laird of Balnamoon, and that the locality was a wild tract of land, not far from his place, called Munrimmon Moor. Balnamoon had been dining out in the neighbourhood, where, by mistake, they had put down to him after dinner cherry-brandy instead of port wine, his usual beverage. The rich flavour and strength so pleased him, that, having tasted it, he would have nothing else. On rising from table, therefore, the laird would be more affected by his drink than if he had taken his ordinary allowance of port. His servant Harry, or Hairy, was to drive him home in a gig or whisky, as it was called, the usual open carriage of the time. On crossing the moor, however, whether from greater exposure to the blast, or from the laird's unsteadiness of head, his hat and wig came off, and fell upon the ground. Harry got out to pick them up and restore them to his master. The laird was satisfied with the hat, but demurred at the wig. "It's no my wig, Hairy, lad; it's no my wig," and refused to have anything to do with it. Hairy lost his patience, and anxious to get home, remonstrated with his master: "Ye'd better tak it, sir, for there's nae waile o' wigs on Munrimmon Moor." The humour of the argument is exquisite, putting to the laird in his unreasonable objection, the sly insinuation that in such a locality, if he did not take *this* wig, he was not likely to find another. Then what a rich expression, "waile o' wigs." In English what is it? "A choice of perukes." There is nothing in the English comparable to the "waile o' wigs." Since the last edition, however, of these Reminiscences, I have received an amusing sequel to the story—after the affair of the wig had been settled, and the laird had consented to return home. When the whisky drove up to the door, Hairy, sitting in front, told the servant who came to "tak out the laird." No laird was to be seen; and it appeared that he had fallen out on the moor without Hairy observing it. Of course they went back, and picking him up, brought him safe home. A neighbouring laird having called a few days after, and having referred to the accident, Balnamoon quietly added: "Indeed, I maun hae a lume [a vessel] that'll *haud in*."

'The late Lady Dalhousie, mother, I mean, of the present distinguished peer, used to tell a characteristic anecdote of her day. A Scottish judge, somewhat in the predicament of the Laird of Balnamoon, had dined at Coalstoun with her father, Charles Brown, an advocate, and son of George Brown, who sat in the supreme court as a judge with the title of Lord Coalstoun. The party had been convivial, as we know parties of the highest legal characters often were in those days. When breaking up, and going to the drawing-room, one of them, not seeing his way very clearly, stepped out of the dining-room window, which was open to the summer air. The ground at Coalstoun sloping off from the house behind, the worthy judge got a great fall, and rolled down the bank. He contrived, however, as tipsy men generally do, to regain his legs, and was able to reach the drawing-room. The first remark he made was an innocent remonstrance with his friend the host: "Od, Charlie Brown, what gars ye hae sik lang steps to your *front* door?" On Deeside, where many original stories had their origin, I recollect hearing several of an excellent and worthy, but very simple-minded man, the Laird of Craigmyle. On one occasion, when the beautiful and clever Jane, Duchess of Gordon, was scouring through the country, intent upon some of those electioneering schemes which often occupied her fertile imagination and active energies, she came to call at Craigmyle, and having heard that the laird was making bricks on the property, for the purpose of building a new garden-wall, with her usual tact she opened the subject, and kindly asked: "Well, Mr Gordon, and how do your bricks come on?" Good Craigmyle's thoughts were much occupied with a new leather part of his dress, which he had lately constructed, so, looking down on his nether garments, he said in pure Aberdeen dialect: "Muckle obleeged to yer Grace; the breeks war sum ticht at first, but they are deeing weel eneuch noo." The last Laird of Macnab, before the clan finally broke up and emigrated to Canada, was a well-known character in the country, and, being poor, used to ride into Aberdeen on a most wretched horse, which gave occasion to many gibes at the laird's expense. A young wit, by way of playing him off, asked him in a contemptuous tone: "Is that the same horse you had last year, laird?" "Na," said the laird, brandishing his whip in the interrogator's face in so emphatic a manner as to preclude further questions—"Na; but it's the same *whup*." In those days, as might be expected, people were not nice in expressions of their dislike to persons or measures. If there be not more charity in society now-a-days, there is certainly more courtesy. I have, from a friend, an anecdote illustrative of this remark, in regard to feelings exercised towards an unpopular laird. In the neighbourhood of Bamff, in Forfarshire, the seat of the Ramsays of that Ilk, was the proprietor of Corb—a family passed away, and the estate merged into neighbouring property. This laird was intensely disliked in the neighbourhood. Sir George Ramsay was, on the other hand, universally popular and respected. On one occasion, Sir George, in passing a morass in his own neighbourhood, had missed the road, and fallen into a bog to an alarming depth. To his great relief, he saw a passenger coming along the path, which was at no great distance. He called loudly for his help, but the man took no notice. Poor Sir George felt himself sinking, and redoubled his cries for assistance: all at once the passenger rushed forward, carefully extricated him from his perilous position, and politely apologised for his first neglect of his appeal, adding, as his reason: "Indeed, Sir George, I thought it was Corb!" evidently meaning that *had* it been Corb, he must have taken his chance for him. Of another laird whom I heard often spoken of in old times, an anecdote was told, strongly Scotch. Our friend had much difficulty (as many worthy lairds have had) in meeting the claims of those two woful periods of the year called with us in Scotland the "tarmes." He had been employing for some time as workman a stranger from the south on some house repairs, of the not uncommon name in England of Christmas. His servant early one morning called out at the laird's door in great excitement that Christmas had run away, and nobody knew where he had gone. He turned in his bed with the earnest ejaculation: "I only wish he had taken Whitsunday and Martinmas along with him!" I have heard of an amusing scene between a laird celebrated for his saving propensities, and a wandering sort of Edie Ochiltree, a well-known itinerant, who lived by his wits and what he could pick up in his rounds amongst the houses of lairds and farmers. One thrifty laird, having seen him sit down near his own gate to examine the contents of his poke or wallet, conjectured that he had come from the house, and so he drew near to see what he had carried off. As he was keenly investigating the mendicant's spoils, his quick eye detected some bones on which there remained more meat than should have been allowed to leave his kitchen. Accordingly, he pounced upon the bones, and declared he had been robbed, and insisted on his returning to the house, and giving back the spoil. The beggar was, however, prepared for the attack, and sturdily defended his property, boldly asserting, "Na, na, laird, these are no Todbrae banes; these are Inch-byre banes, and nane o' your honour's"—meaning that he had received these bones at the house of a neighbour of a more liberal character. But the beggar's professional discrimination between the bones of the two mansions, and his pertinacious defence of his own property, would have been most amusing to a bystander.'

Our own impression is that humour, as distinguished from wit, is a quality characteristic to an unusual degree of the Scotch people of all grades. It is powerfully diffused through the writings of Smollett, Burns, and Scott. Nearly the whole of the anecdotes here collected by Dean Ramsay are instances of humour; while of wit, the quick play of fancy amongst comically associated ideas, there is but here and there an example, such as the following: 'A couple were brought before the kirk-session, and the wife Janet was charged with violent and undutiful conduct, and with wounding her husband, by throwing a three-legged stool at his head. The minister rebuked her conduct, and pointed out its grievous character, by explaining that just as Christ was head of his church, so the husband was head of the wife; and therefore, in assaulting *him*, she had, in fact, injured her own body. "Weel," she replied, "it's come to a fine pass gin a wife canna kame her ain head." "Ay, but, Janet," rejoined the minister, "a three-legged stool is a thief-like bane-kame to scart yer ain head wi'!"'

Here the expressions of Janet and the minister are both eminently witty. So also is the remark in the following anecdote: 'A preacher being sent to officiate one Sunday at a country parish, was accommodated at night in the manse, in a very diminutive closet, instead of the usual best bedroom appropriated to strangers.

"Is this the bedroom?" he said, starting back in amazement.

"Deed, ay, sir; this is the prophets' chammer."

"It maun be for the *minor* prophets, then," was the quiet reply.'

Dean Ramsay pays little attention to such discriminations, and sometimes, as appears to us, does not classify his anecdotes quite appropriately. For example, he places in close juxtaposition with the above the following: 'A minister in the north returning thanks in his prayers one Sabbath for the excellent harvest, began, as usual, "O Lord, we thank thee," &c., and went on to mention its abundance and its safe ingathering; but feeling anxious to be quite candid and scrupulously truthful, added, "All except a few fields between this and Stonehaven, not worth mentioning."' We have here a specimen of simplicity and incongruity with a comic effect, but neither humour nor wit.

The worthy Dean's concluding remarks are such as all must approve of: 'We will hope that, with an improved exterior, there is improvement in society within. If the feelings shrink from what is coarse in expression, we may hope that vice has in some sort lost attraction. At any rate, from what we discern around us, we hope favourably for the general improvement of mankind, and of our own beloved country in particular. If Scotland, in parting with her rich and racy dialect, her odd and eccentric characters, is to lose something in quaint humour and good stories, we will hope she may grow and strengthen in *better* things—good as those are which she loses. However this may be, I feel quite assured that the examples which I have now given of Scottish expressions, Scottish modes and habits of life, and Scottish anecdotes, which belong in a great measure to the past, and yet which are remembered as having a place in the present century, must carry conviction that great changes have taken place in the Scottish social circle. There were some things belonging to our country which we must all have desired should be changed; there were others which we could only see changed with regret and sorrow. The hardy and simple habits of Scotsmen of many past generations—their industry, economy, and integrity, which made them take so high a place in the estimation and the confidence of the people amongst whom they dwelt in all countries of the world; the intelligence and superior education of her mechanics and her peasantry, combined with a strict moral and religious demeanour, fully justified the praise of Burns when he described the humble, though sublime piety of the *Cotter's Saturday Night*, and we can well appreciate the testimony which he bore to the hallowed power and sacred influences of the devotional exercises of his boyhood's home, when he penned the immortal words—

> From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
> That makes her loved at home, revered abroad.

These things, we hope and trust, under the Divine blessing, will never change, except to increase, and will never become a question of reminiscences for the past. If Scotland has lost much of the quaint and original character of former lawyers, lairds, and old ladies, much of the pungent wit and dry humour of sayings in her native dialect, she can afford to sustain the loss if she gain in refinement, and lose not the more solid qualities and more valuable characteristics by which she has been distinguished.'

THE GREAT SHIP—IN FULL DRESS.

On this bright August day, when steamers and excursion-trains strongly tempt the Londoner to leave the metropolis far behind him, by offering to waft him away to lochs and lakes at marvellously low fares—on such a day, the unsavoury Thames has much ado to get up a good bill of attractions. The Chelsea boats and the Greenwich boats have come down in the world; that is, have had to lower their fares; and they attribute their misfortunes to the sanitary or insanitary state of matters. Yet we could bear a double dose of Thames with such an object in view as the vast floating fabric, which, first named the *Great Eastern*, next assumed the title of the *Leviathan*, then resumed its first baptismal appellation, and is now, it seems, to be simply *the Great Ship*. A better name than this last could not possibly be devised; for a ship that could double up and fold in its bosom half-a-dozen other ships may well be called the Great.

And yet the puzzle is, how this ship can be so great without seeming so. Of those who express wonder as they pass up and down the river, at least one-half do so because they think they *ought*. Listen to their quiet under-voiced comments, and you hear: 'It doesn't look so big as I expected;' or, 'It is large, but not so *very* large.' But herein lies the compliment to Brunel and Scott Russell. The vessel is so exquisitely proportioned everywhere and in everything, that the vastness of size is lost in the harmony of the whole. When the same visitors have walked the deck and the paddle-box gangways, and have made the tour of the saloons, and have dived into the recesses of the engine-rooms, boiler-rooms, coal-bunkers, and tunnels, the most genuine wonder is depicted on their countenances, wonder mingled with good honest hearty admiration; and the more they know of other ships, the more they wonder at this.

We will not treat the reader as being quite ignorant of the history of this unequalled specimen of naval architecture. Something of its history is more or less familiar to all of us. We know, for instance—or, if we do not, we must have been shut out a good deal from the reading world—that the *Great Ship* was planned seven years ago; that Mr Brunel planned it, on the basis of giving to the ship a capacity to carry coal enough for a voyage to Australia and back; that Mr Scott Russell built the ship, adopting his own principle of the wave-line for its shape, and Mr Robert Stephenson's cellular principle for its construction; that the ship progressed slowly towards completion, under great financial embarrassments; that the launching was quite a history in itself; that the company finally broke down under the weight of pecuniary responsibilities; and that a new company, commencing work without an incubus of debt, sent an army of workmen into the noble vessel last spring. Some among us, adepts in figures, can tell how that the upper deck is 692 feet in length; that the extreme width at the broadest part is equal to that of Portland Place in London; that the height of the hull is 60 feet; that the weight of the mere hull itself, in iron, is 7000 tons; that when laden with everything, living and dead, for which Brunel planned it and Scott Russell built it, the mighty ship will weigh 25,000 tons; that 10,000 iron plates were used in the construction, fastened by 2,000,000 rivets; that the hull has everywhere double walls, with a cellular space between them, like the Menai Britannia Bridge; that the ship is cut off into ten vast boxes or compartments, each one thoroughly water-tight, and independent of the others; that several of these compartments have each a large and complete hotel, with saloons, dining-rooms, kitchens, larders, and sculleries, deposited in it, as if dropped down from above into a vast box; and that it is only a question of carpenter's work to make these hotels equal to the requirements of 4000 passengers—that is to say, a community equal to the population of a small town, besides a crew and working-staff of 400, has to be boarded, lodged, and 'done for,' during the whole time necessary for a voyage to Australia. Others of us, curious in pistons and cylinders, screws and paddles, can tell that the floating monster is to be propelled by screw, paddle, and sails all combined; that the paddle-engines have mighty cylinders 74 inches in diameter, with 14 feet stroke; that the paddle-wheels are larger than the arena at Astley's; that the screw-propeller is 24 feet in diameter, and is worked through the medium of a monster shaft 160 feet in length; that the engines for the screw have cylinders 84 inches in diameter; that each of these cylinders was made in one casting with 34 tons of molten metal; and that all the engines together would work up to many thousands of horse-power.

But whether the visitor be learned or not in figures, he soon becomes lost to all definite quantities when pacing above or diving within the ship; a sort of vague wonderment drives away all precise calculation. Ascending the side of the vessel, and landing on one of the decks, he finds around him a labyrinth of saloons, cabins, and passages, through which he can scarcely thread his way without a guide; and then he reaches *the* saloon, the *magnum opus* of decorative upholstery. On the school-boy's principle, of always leaving the sweetest apple to the last, we would fain visit this saloon as a climax to everything else in the ship, a perfume to remove the heat and oil of the engine-rooms. But, no; we could not enter such a place with soiled hands or untidy garments! 'Twould be a desecration. This saloon is the first-class cabin, or rather, the drawing-room of the first-class cabin. It is the best room for the best-paying passengers; and such a room never before did eyes behold in a ship. True, the superb Cunard and Collins steamers nearly equal it in the quality of the fittings and the tastefulness of the arrangement; but then those steamers are wanting in the facilities afforded by vastness of size. The utmost which the builder of an ordinary passenger-steamer can effect is, to make his saloons and cabins high enough to avert collision between the heads of the people and the beams of the ceiling; but Mr Scott Russell has given *fourteen feet* of height—ay, and that to the second as well as to the first class rooms. Those who have experienced the close and unpleasant atmosphere of the saloons of steamers, will understand the nature of the relief likely to be afforded by nearly doubling the height between floor and ceiling. This saloon, longer, and broader, and higher than any saloon yet afloat, and having few parallels even on land, has been handed over to skilful workmen, who have absorbed no less a sum than L.3000 for the painting, gilding, mirrors, carpeting, and curtains. The delicate arabesques of the coffered ceiling; the mirrors that surround and hide the bulky funnels and masts, rendering them adjuncts rather than obstacles to beauty; the velvet couches and settees; the luxurious carpet; the gilded trellis-work; the silken hangings; the polished tables; the thousand little delicacies which come into sight as the visit is more and more prolonged, all combine to render this a sumptuous though not too gorgeous an apartment, because refined taste has avoided showy colours and incongruous mixtures. It is, indeed, eminently a saloon of beauty; though probably to any one suffering under sea-sickness, its splendour would be a mockery. But we forget: the initiated, from Mr Scott Russell and Captain Harrison down to the stokers and cabin-boys, will not admit of such a visitation as sea-sickness on board the *Great Ship;* they say that the floating palace will ride on the waves instead of plunging into them, and that there will be less pitching and less rolling than in any other ship. Let us hope so.

The reader who has yet to have the pleasure (and may he soon have it) of visiting this ship must not suppose that all the care has been lavished on the grand saloon. The saloon or dining-room for second-class passengers is so cheery in its wide extension, lofty ceiling, plain polished mahogany tables, neat chairs, and serviceable fittings of every kind, that we are half inclined to deem it more *comfortable* than its splendid neighbour; and indeed the superiority of the *Great Ship* over all others is perhaps more apparent in the second than in the first class accommodation. Owing to the vast dimensions of the vessel, there is ample space for more than one grand saloon, and more than one second-class saloon; there is an elastic capability, enabling the proprietors to adapt the internal arrangements to whatever commercial career may be in store for the good ship. In like manner, as to third-class accommodation; the reader must not imagine that the splendour is such as to drive away the man of slender purse. A portion of the fore-half of the ship, between the paddle-wheels and the forecastle, could easily be fitted up for more than a thousand third-class passengers, or soldiers, as the case may be; it is, as we have before observed, mere carpenter's work to make this vessel a living place for 4000 persons; and, we may add, there would even then be room for 5000 tons of merchandise cargo, and for 12,000 tons of coal to supply the motive-power.

We must perhaps apologise for leading the reader to believe that the *Great Ship* is really 'in full dress;' she is not so, on this day of our August visit. And yet the term is not badly chosen; for we can easily see what she may become, when the attiring is fully completed. At present, the walls of the second cabin are left plain white, and bare, until after the experimental trip; a troop of handy workmen will soon give form and finish to it, when the first really commercial voyage is about to be made. And so in relation to the third-class accommodation; it is not yet actually provided; but there is what Dr Johnson would have called a 'potentiality' everywhere about the ship, a power of becoming useful in a very short space of time. It is easily seen how a thousand or more third-class passengers will be housed in a way never dreamed of by those who know only the discomforts in the 'steerage' of an ordinary ship.

How about the bedrooms or berths? Like the cabins, these rooms are altogether unprecedented on shipboard, in the matter of height. With good judgment, everything like finery has been avoided here; nothing is admitted but what will conduce to the comfort of the occupants. In some, the bed-places are against the wall, in the usual way of ship-berths; in others, the bedsteads are made to fold up, so as to render the cabin available as a sitting-room by day. Neat green curtains, running on brass rods, can be drawn around the beds at night, and lie flat against the wall by day. Green-cushioned seats are placed wherever there is room for them; and little contrivances are everywhere provided for stowing away or hanging up the odds and ends which a passenger always likes to have near at hand. The passages and corridors, out of which the sleeping-cabins open, are provided with lavatories, bath-rooms, &c., to an extent that will add immensely to the comfort of all on board. Some of the sleeping-rooms are lighted from the side of the ship, some from the interior. We should imagine that the innermost cabins on the lower deck must be somewhat deficient in light; but on this matter we are not fully certain.

So ample is the space, that there is room for a number of cozy vestibules, anterooms, and galleries, not exactly in the saloons or cabins, and yet not exposed to the open air; places with cushioned seats, where passengers may sit and gossip, work, read, and do anything but smoke; the lovers of the weed must not encroach on these snuggeries; there are smoking-rooms for them, besides an eighth of a mile (and more) of flush-deck for them to walk upon. As to the staircases, hatchways, companion-ladders, or whatever they may be called, we really cannot venture to say how many there are, leading down from the deck to the vast interior. The reader must bear in mind, that in order to render the ship proof against hard blows, the interior is divided by iron walls into several compartments; the walls extend from side to side, and from deck to bottom; and are so unbroken by any openings, that passengers cannot go from one compartment to another without ascending one staircase to the deck, and then descending another. Each compartment is, in fact, complete in itself, and would remain dry even if those adjoining were filled with water by a breach, or at least such is the expectation of the constructer. The compartments are about ten in number; and each will be the floating home for a community separated from all others on board, except on the neutral ground of the deck, which covers the whole of them.

Perchance some housewife who reads this paper may have bethought her of the kitchen and the cooks, and of the wherewithal to supply these battalions of hungry people. She may be assured that such things have not been forgotten. Kitchens, larders, pantries, and sculleries are provided in all or most of the compartments. The kitchens have—or will have when finished—those ingenious combinations of boilers, ovens, hot plates, stew-pans, roasting-grates, broiling stoves, &c., which our ironmongers are now so clever at making, and which will cook dinner for a large number of persons in a very small cubical space. A visitor walking along the deck sees two doorways in each paddle-box; these he finds lead to passages and staircases within the paddle-boxes themselves, communicating with kitchens in the regions below. These are cunning devices which will be very convenient to cooks and waiters, and will lessen the probability of savoury dishes 'wasting their sweetness on the desert air.' As to the store of creature-comforts necessary for the temporary dwellers in the *Great Ship*, this is, of course, a question of numbers. We know that the *Himalaya* took out a thousand soldiers to the Black Sea during the Crimean war, and fed them regularly and well; and if the public will only consent to voyage by thousands in this much larger vessel, there is every reason to believe that the commissariat department will be duly attended to.

It is when a visitor gets among the machinery that bewilderment is most likely to seize upon him. The steam-engines are so much more vast than those of any other ship, that each engine-room is more than a room—it is a factory. The paddle-engines, built by Mr Scott Russell at the place where the ship itself was built, are actually nearly fifty feet in height, from the lowermost support of the bed-plate to the uppermost sweep of the crank. This height of 50 feet is divided by light iron flooring and platforms into many stages, connected by light iron ladders, in such way as to give easy access to every part of the machinery. As he descends lower down these iron ladders, the visitor feels that the engines are something tremendous even in their silent quietude; and remembering that these huge masses of iron revolve and slide quite smoothly under the influence of steam-power, he must needs admire the perfection which engineering mechanism has now reached. If the upper part of the machinery is the brightest and most visible, the lower part strikes most on the imagination. Darker and darker do the slender ladders become until we reach the bottom, where mysterious passages lead to the numerous and capacious boilers in which the steam is raised, to the furnaces which lie beneath these boilers, to the doors through which coal is thrown into these furnaces, to the bunkers or enormous receptacles in which coal can be stored to the quantity of ten or twelve thousand tons (forty collier ship loads) at once; and to the mighty pipe, kept warm in its jacket of non-conducting materials, through which steam will travel from the boilers to the engines. Not the least strange among the scenes in these lower regions are the two tunnels. We have said that all the compartments in the hull of the ship are cut off one from another; but there is an exception to this in the case of two iron tunnels, which extend 160 feet along the vessel far below the water-level, and piercing several of the partition-walls; but the joints at these places are sedulously made water-tight. The tunnels are for the purpose of giving the engineers free passage between the paddle-engine room and the screw-engine room, and also to accommodate one of the jacketed steam-pipes. These pitchy-dark tunnels, echoing the footsteps from their sides and wall and floor of sheet-iron, might suggest a host of gloomy images to us—if we would let them.

Further ahead, and here and there in different parts of the mighty fabric, are the rooms for ship-stores, and the berths for officers and men. When these rooms are only half-filled, and their contents not yet symmetrically arranged, they appear like a whole range of warehouses—tier above tier, one opening into another, with trap-doors gaping from the upper to the lower. And yet, when we have seen a whole range of these rooms, we find that it is simply the contents of one compartment, cut off from others of similar kind by the iron walls or bulkheads.

Arrived again on deck, there are the five funnels before us—those vast sheet-iron cylinders through which, when lying on the deck a few months ago, a tall man could walk upright; and there are the six masts, some built up of spars, some made of plate-iron, with disks or diaphragms at intervals to strengthen them within; and the rigging, some of which exhibits a new mode of combining hemp and wire in the same rope; and the quadrangle of gangways between and upon the paddle-boxes, whence Captain Harrison will observe and control everything; and the telegraph with the index-hand, and the words 'Ahead,' 'Astern,' 'Slow,' 'Stop,' 'Go on,' &c., by which the captain will communicate with the engineer down in the depths below—the engineer looking at a dial which will tell the tale silently; and the boats, a whole row hanging over each side of the ship, and provided with the new quick-lowering apparatus; and the machinery for working the rudder—— But we must stop.

We need not, perhaps, expend much pity on the original shareholders, who have lost so much money by the *Great Ship;* because they are, most of them, persons of ample means, who can bear the loss among them without much disaster. But we shall certainly owe them a debt of gratitude, even if the ship should fail; for the failure will afford abundance of experience, which will be useful hereafter. If, on the other hand, the grand vessel really becomes the monarch of the ocean, bringing honour to her designer and builder, and profit to her *present* owners, then should we still more thank those who bore the great financial burden. What will be the first trial-trips, and whither the first real commercial voyage, may possibly be known before this sheet reaches the reader's hands; and we have only now to say—God speed the *Great Ship!*

GERMAN SERVANTS.

The *Dienst Mädchen*, or servant-maids, in Hohenbraten, are, as Mrs Stowe said of the English grass, 'an institution.' The first specimen of the class whose services I secured was a good-looking damsel named Louise. All her kindly meant endeavours to make us comfortable in our German home seemed to centre in providing facilities for smoking. Now, as the only male member of our party was a boy of fifteen, who had once been made wofully sick by taking a few whiffs of a cigar belonging to his elder brother, this care was rather superfluous. Seeing that my drawing-room was provided with one of those odious sand-filled receptacles needful to every true son of the Vaterland, I, as the sentimental novels say, 'motioned it away.'

'Ja! So! Gut!' said Louise, and carried it off. Presently she reappeared with it filled with fresh sand, and a second article of the same kind, one being destined for the bedroom, the other for the drawing-room. I had much difficulty in convincing her that none of us smoked.

Louise, judging from appearances, must have been related to half the standing army of the kingdom. I was constantly meeting on the stairs tall fellows in uniform, and with gold earrings in their ears.

'Was brauchen Sie?' I used to ask. 'Die Louise. Ist sie zu Hause?'

These were all cousins, brothers, or uncles, my Mädchen assured me; but I found that they paid their respects to the contents of my larder in a style worthy of Policeman X. This military mania is epidemic amongst the Hohenbraten serving-maidens. I heard an instance of it which lately occurred. A German officer, a married man, was returning home one evening after nightfall. Now, although the house in which he lived was a handsome one, it was pitch dark on the stairs. This is the case in all German dwellings; for as the staircase is common to every one, it is nobody's business to light it. The officer was therefore contentedly groping his way upwards, when he heard a quick footstep coming down towards him. A pair of stout greasy arms were lovingly clasped round his neck; a kiss, redolent of garlic, impressed on his astonished lips; a sausage and a *sechser*—a coin, value twopence—thrust into his hands; while a voice, which he recognised as that of his cook, whispered: 'Here, take this; I can't wait any longer, for mistress is calling me!' Up sped the footsteps again, and at the same moment a beam of light, proceeding probably from a candle held on the landing by 'mistress,' came from above. The officer looked round, and there, drawn up behind him in an angle, looking the picture of consternation, stood a private soldier of his regiment. 'Here,' said the officer, turning towards him with the most perfect coolness, 'here's the sausage for you, and here's the sechser; the kiss I can't give.' No doubt an *éclaircissement* took place between the lover and his fair one; and her subsequent meeting with her master must have been of rather an embarrassing nature.

Although the German coffee is most excellent, my friends and I began after a while, like all true-born subjects of Queen Victoria, to long for a cup of tea. Talk of roast beef and plum-pudding as our national dishes! Why, *rosbif* figures at every French *table d'hôte*, *Englischen Braten* at every German one; and the very best plum-pudding I ever tasted came up blazing in rum, like an infernal machine, at a restaurant in the Palais Royal. But tea is essentially a British beverage. It would be far easier to get up a *coup d'état* in that pleasant combustible city of Paris, than a pot of genuine gunpowder, or even mild souchong. Our continental neighbours can't make tea—the gift is not in them. I certainly succeeded in procuring a very tolerable specimen of the dry article from a civil grocer, who, on behalf of the English residents in Hohenbraten, 'gave himself up,' as he told me, to Harvey's Sauce, Batty's Mustard, pale ale, and other commodities supposed indispensable to the British palate. But I speedily discovered that although one woman may bring a pound of tea to a German stove, twenty can hardly make it fit to drink. First of all, there was a *Thee-maschine* to be provided; and after hunting through half the shops in Hohenbraten, I succeeded in discovering and purchasing the very ugliest white-ware tea-pot I ever beheld. After all, there was something so uncompromising in its solid square unsightliness, that one felt it *would* make tea, if only it got the chance. I gave Louise, as I thought, full instructions touching the process to be pursued; but the desired beverage not making its appearance, I went into the kitchen to inspect progress. There I found my Mädchen standing by the stove, with a glass decanter in her hand, into which she was going to pour some tepid water.

'What is that for?' I inquired.

'For the tea,' she replied. 'Did not the *gnädige Frau* wish for warm water?'

'Oh, but,' I said, 'that will never do; the water must be quite boiling.'

'Not at all,' Louise assured me. She knew perfectly all about tea-making. Coffee required to be made with boiling water; but for tea, it was quite sufficient to have it warm. I felt too thirsty and too tired to combat her theory; so simply desiring her to make the water boil, I took the preparation into my own hands, and succeeded in procuring a cup of really good tea.

Louise became at length so decidedly military in her tastes that the business of our household was totally neglected, and I was forced to give her her *congé*. Her successor was named Juliana Humpf; and I hoped, as the Scotchman said, that 'her face and her fifty years wad keep her frae sin;' but I speedily discovered that there are other failings quite as annoying as those which spring from the tender passion. Juliana, certainly, although she did wear gold earrings, and did not wear a cap, always spoke of *Die junge Mädchen* as a class with whom she had neither part nor lot; and she encouraged no followers, save one antiquated coachman, who might have flourished in the days of Frederick Barbarossa, for any tincture that he possessed of modern sprightliness. I have met with a good many obstinate men and women in my time, but any one so positive, so thoroughly wrapped up in her own opinions and practices as Juliana Humpf, I never encountered. She *would* set before us her vile German cookery, all tough fibre, grease, and vinegar, expressing at the same time the utmost contempt for English dishes. One day, disregarding her cross looks and speeches, I ventured into the kitchen, saw myself that the *Braten* (roast-beef) was properly cooked, and had it brought to table 'with the gravy in.' My Mädchen made very good soup, if one did not mind the grease; and this day I let her have her own way with the *bouilli*, which having formed the foundation of two days' soup, was about as eatable and nourishing as a handful of chips. So after our dinner, I told her she might dine on the roast-beef. She looked first at the dish and then at me, just as an English servant might have done if desired to eat a haunch of dog or a fillet of cat. 'No,' she said, 'she would not for a *Kronen-thaler* touch such ugly, gory-looking stuff; she would dine on the bouilli; *that* was nice—*that* was.

'Curious people they are,' she said: 'they would give more money for a dirty, old, tattered picture, painted two or three hundred years ago, than they would for a nice new fresh one. In Nürnberg,' she added, 'our people collect all the old trumpery that a German would not give six *kreuzers* for, and sell it at a high price to English travellers.'

She was dreadfully afraid of the comet. 'Look,' she used to say, 'it must be sent as a sign of punishment, for it is just the shape of a rod.' Sancho Panza himself would have been no match for Juliana in the article of proverbs. 'When one can't dance, one must only play the fiddle,' was a favourite saying of hers.

'Are there many servants out of place in the town?' I asked her one day.

'Many?' she exclaimed; 'so many that you might feed the pigs with them.'

Cross-grained as our antiquated Mädchen often was, I felt rather sorry to part with her; but the daily deluge of grease and vinegar was more than our insular stomachs could endure. So Juliana Humpf was deposed, and Agatha Niek reigneth in her stead. She is a quiet-looking young damsel, who would propound no objection if I desired her to roast a leg of the kitchen-table, or to make a *soufflée* of the bellows. I asked her in plain German if she had any lovers, and she replied, with an air worthy of that 'Holy Agatha' whom Mrs Paul Rooney used to invoke, 'Gott bewahre!' I have not, however, as yet seen enough of Jungfer Agatha to feel quite certain that this pious abnegation is altogether genuine and likely to last.

THE TELEMETER.

A very simple instrument, called a Telemeter, for ascertaining the distance of an object when its height is known, has been invented by Mr Cumberland Hill of Heriot's Hospital, Edinburgh. It is constructed on the principle that the greater the distance of the object, the smaller that object appears to be. It is a common telescope with the usual cross-wires, but it has, in addition, two movable wires, which are made to approach or recede from each other. This is effected by means of a circular plate concentric with the telescope, and having the numbers 1, 2, 3, &c., engraved on it, to indicate hundreds of yards—the figures passing in succession before an index which is fixed to the telescope. The whole arrangement for producing this motion occupies no more space than a very thin Geneva watch, and is placed about an inch and a half from the eye of the observer. It can be applied to any telescope, and does not interfere at all with the action of the instrument, nor with its being shut up in a small compass. When it is desired to find the distance of an object of which the height is known—a soldier, for instance, or an upright rod six feet high—the circular plate is turned round till the upper thread touches the top of the object, and the lower the bottom, then under the index is seen the figure denoting the distance. If the object, instead of being six feet in height, which is the standard adopted, is twelve feet, then the real distance is twice that indicated; and, on the other hand, if it is three feet, the actual distance is only half that indicated. Hence, if we multiply the distance (indicated) by the height in feet, and divide by six, we obtain the actual distance. When the object is at a great distance, only one of the moving threads is regarded, and the object is enclosed between it and the fixed cross-wire which runs parallel to it. This gives the advantage of much larger divisions for great distances. The smaller class of instruments, whose cost is about thirty shillings, may be depended on from a hundred to a thousand yards; but with more powerful telescopes, a distance of three or four thousand yards may be approximately ascertained. It is considered to be a good instrument for rifle and artillery practice, and also for approximations in land-measuring.

TEARS.

My heart is lone, my Love is gone,
The long dark day will never have done;
The rain falls fast, the clouds veil all,
But not one tear can I let fall,
Though my brain is burning and wild;
I would weep like an orphaned child,
But my heart is frozen and hard;
My brow would burst, but it is barred,
A prison-house of burning steel;
I cannot utter that I feel,
I cannot feel as I would try,
I loathe my life, I crave to die,
For then I should not see him more
With one foot on the white sea-shore,
And one upon the bark.—Ah! see
How his wet eyes are turned to me,
And his right hand waving so!
That I should e'er have let him go,
And live! He stands so fixed for years.
My God, I thank thee—Tears, Tears, Tears!

EMERITUS.

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A LEGEND OF PORT PHILLIP.

ONE of my earliest and most cherished Australian friends was Tom Courtney—'Gentleman Tom,' as he was called, partly in derision, and partly from respect, by his less-polished neighbours. Although affable and courteous to all, there was yet a superiority of manner about Tom, which indicated gentle birth, and so jarred somewhat on the *amour propre* of men who carved their way to wealth and station even from the lowest round of Fortune's ladder.

When I first became acquainted with Courtney, he occupied a 'run' in the Dandenongs, a picturesque mountain-range about twelve miles eastward of Melbourne. He was then a bachelor; but erelong, a bright-eyed fairy presided over his hospitable hearth; for when he bravely set forth to seek his fortune at the antipodes, the chosen of his heart was left behind: long years elapsed ere success attended his labours; yet neither dreamed of breaking plighted faith. In 1836, the new colony of Port Phillip was opened up, and Courtney was quickly on the spot with his flocks. Then, when the sun of prosperity shone upon him, he wrote for her who had promised to tread the path of life with him, and she came.

She quitted home and home comforts, and friends, and parents, and brethren, all that was most dear to her, and went her way across the stormy ocean, to share his rude home in the Australian wilderness. So Tom Courtney became a happy Benedict, and a fond, proud father.

The chief troubles of the early settlers in Port Phillip were caused by the dingoes, or wild-dogs, and the aborigines. I use the past tense, because these evils are now, in a great degree, eradicated. But in the days whereof I speak, the whole country was infested by packs of wild-dogs, whose ravages often entailed considerable loss on the sheep-farmer. It is a peculiarity of this animal that, not content with killing sufficient to satisfy hunger, they will maim and destroy many more; and not unfrequently whole flocks have been dispersed by them. They are, therefore, greatly dreaded by the settler, to whom the howl of the dingo is the *avant-courier* of misfortune.

With regard to the natives, much might be said on both sides. That some of the colonists cruelly oppressed and wantonly shot them down, is unhappily too true; nor can such a result surprise those who are acquainted with the class of men who constituted much of the *matériel* of the new settlement. On the other hand, the blacks were treacherous to a degree; greedy of the white man's flour and meat, greedier of his rum. They were, moreover, very revengeful; and their reprisals were often marked by circumstances of great atrocity. Many a victim was immolated by their spears; and many a flourishing settler utterly ruined by their destruction of his flocks and herds.

No blame could be justly attached to Courtney's conduct in this respect. He was far too humane to destroy life wantonly; indeed, so punctilious was he that the very magpies were safe from his gun, and not a parrot fell save when required for the family pie—for very savoury and delicious eating is parrot-pie, as I know full well. To the blacks, Courtney was specially kind; and I have often thought that the pertinacity wherewith sundry of the colonists subsequently sought to brand him with the foul stain of homicide, originated in this very circumstance. By them, the simple indolent aboriginal was regarded solely in the light of a nuisance, and they blamed Tom for conduct, which, in their eyes, appeared exceedingly and absurdly sentimental. But he heeded them not. 'The natives are the rightful lords of the soil,' he argued, 'and we having deprived them thereof, they surely have a claim on our hospitality.' So Tom fed, and would have clothed them, but for the knowledge that they scorned to indue their limbs in the tight apparel prescribed by European civilisation. One thing only would he not give them—ardent spirits. This was a source of grief to the natives, and no less so to their white enemies, who secretly desired the destruction of the whole native population. But Tom was firm; and neither the persuasions of his neighbours, nor the entreaties and threats of the blacks, availed aught.

Amongst the Dandenong natives was a tall, athletic black fellow, a kind of chief amongst his people, with whom strength is paramount, who had been humoured in his pretensions by the settlers dubbing him 'king,' a title which possessed all the charms of novel grandeur for the poor, untutored savage. Accordingly, King Billy—for he sunk his own more euphonious cognomen—with his leaden medal, whereon were inscribed his name and style, dependent from his brawny neck by a gaudy red ribbon, was a very great personage in his own eyes, and also in those of the tribe; and was wont to display a considerable degree of authoritative dignity in his intercourse with the whites of the district.

It happened on one occasion that King Billy, having got gloriously drunk elsewhere, staggered into Tom's home-station, and peremptorily insisted on a further supply of rum. Courtney was from home; and the overseer, who was summoned in alarm by Mrs Courtney, being desirous of getting rid of the fellow quietly, treated him to a small dose of spirit, into which a tolerably strong emetic had previously been infused. Of course, Billy was very ill, and very angry; and he retreated, vowing vengeance on all and sundry of Courtney's household.

A few nights after this occurrence, a large number of sheep disappeared from the fold. This was the more unaccountable, inasmuch as the discordant yell of the dingo had not lately been heard in the neighbourhood. That the mischief was, however, ascribable to those nocturnal depredators, Tom never for an instant doubted. The precautions usual in such cases were therefore adopted: the shepherds were armed, night-watchmen were appointed, and joints of meat impregnated with strychnine were scattered about the run.

Despite the vigilance of the watchmen, who declared that they had neither slept nor wandered from their charge, three fine wethers disappeared from one of the flocks. Here was a mystery which none could unravel. Tom and one of his overseers got on horseback, purposing to ride into the ranges, in order to discover, if possible, some clue to the enigma. As they were crossing a blind creek (*Anglice*, an occasional water-course, usually dry in the summer), they perceived some natives crouching in one of the hollows, and rode towards them, intending to make some inquiries. As they approached the blacks, the latter remained quite motionless; a circumstance which created little astonishment: they were probably asleep, or, if awake, too lazy to bestir themselves; surely the former, for they heeded not the repeated shouts of the overseer; nay, even when the horses' hoofs were beside them, they still retained their recumbent position. Tom sprang hastily from the saddle, startled by the ghastly appearance of the nearest native; he stooped to rouse him from his apparent stupor, but recoiled horror-stricken from the contact. The man was dead, stone-dead, and so were his companions, three in number, who lay around in attitudes indicative of much pain. Beside them, partially screened from observation by a pile of branches, was the entire carcass of one of the missing sheep, and by the smouldering embers of the camp-fire lay a well-gnawed leg-bone. This the overseer picked up, attentively examined, and silently handed to his master; then their eyes met, and each beheld the reflected image of his own thought; for a dread conviction forced itself upon their unwilling senses, that the blacks had partaken of the poisoned meat!

Such was indeed the fact. Other bodies—those of men, and women, and children—were subsequently discovered. In all, twenty-three had miserably perished; and thus was the mystery elucidated. The flocks had been robbed by the blacks, whose dusky forms and noiseless progress effectually baffled the vigilance of the watchmen. Retreating from the fold, they, unhappily for all parties, perceived the poisoned mutton, and cunningly secreting their live plunder for future use, at once consumed the fatal bait. The result I have already stated.

Various constructions were placed upon this untoward event. Those who best knew Mr Courtney, implicitly believed his own version of the affair. For myself, I never entertained a doubt on the subject. But the majority, misled by exaggerated reports of the quarrel with King Billy, and the subsequent robberies perpetrated by that worthy's tribe, to which the poisoned people belonged, easily believed the mischief to have been wilfully done, by way of retaliation, and openly sneered at Tom's asseverations of innocence. Some even applauded the dexterity of the feat, and not a few set my poor friend down as a consummate hypocrite, who, by a show of great kindness, had lured the natives to more sure destruction.

The whole matter was formally investigated by the local authorities. The practice of poisoning wild-dogs was general; and it was evident to the magistrates that the death of the blacks had resulted from inadvertence alone. Tom was therefore honourably acquitted; but the iron sunk deep into his soul. The cold shade of suspicion had fallen upon him, and thenceforth and for ever more, he was a sadder man.

Tom's station had hitherto been known as Glenferny—a name bestowed upon it because of the numberless arborescent ferns which grow in the gullies of the adjacent ranges. The long, graceful, feathery leaves of these beautiful trees, crowning stems twenty, and even thirty feet in height, afford a grateful shade from the scorching rays of an Australian sun, and form a pleasing and picturesque feature in the landscapes of that region. But now it seemed to Tom as if their glory had departed. The very name of Glenferny was gradually consigned to oblivion, superseded by a term which originated with the natives themselves, and ever brought to mind the seemingly atrocious and really unfortunate events which I have related. They said emphatically that the place was 'No Good,' and as No-good the station is known even to the present day.

King Billy disappeared from the district for a while, and was generally supposed to have shared the fate of his countrymen; but, in truth, he was only hiding from what he deemed the vengeance of the man who had been his protector, and whose flocks he had nevertheless assisted to despoil. After a lapse of some months, he was seen by a shepherd, skulking about the run. Simultaneously with his reappearance, various calamities befell Tom Courtney. Now were sheep lost or destroyed, now a hut was robbed, and anon the fence of the home-paddock was mysteriously broken down, and the cattle escaped. Immunity from punishment only incited to greater offences. One morning, Tom's favourite horse, and a pony which he was training for his wife's use, were found dead, and the spear-wounds in their sides betrayed the authors of the mischief. Shortly after, the 'run' was simultaneously fired in three several places; and Tom narrowly escaped losing, not only the whole of his stock, but his very life, and the lives of his family.

This could not be borne. Hitherto, he had patiently submitted to his mishaps, hoping to tire the malice of his adversaries, and doubtlessly remembering the past. But now he obtained the assistance of some constables from Melbourne, and easily secured the person of the redoubtable King Billy. But nothing inculpatory could be extracted from the crafty black. Billy positively refused to know anything; and the evidence being too vague to justify his detention, he was set at liberty. The evening after the examination, Courtney was slowly riding homewards, when a native emerged from a clump of fragrant mimosa-bushes, and stood before him. It was King Billy. Instinctively, Courtney halted.

'White fellow bery much fool!'—thus spoke the savage. 'What for him put King Billy in stone hut? (jail.) King Billy do nothing.' And he laughed a short, low, cunning laugh, which contrasted strangely with his assumed stolidity of a few hours previous. Quickly checking himself, however, he resumed his denunciation thus. 'White fellow bery much rascal! What for him make Billy sick? What for him kill black fellow? White fellow bery bad! Him kill black fellow's lubra; him kill piccaninny, no bigger so (lowering his hand to within two feet of the ground); him kill bery lilly (little) piccaninny no bigger dat (indicating an infant). What for white fellow do so?'

Courtney was greatly agitated. Had the black lifted his spear, the white man would have fallen unresistingly.

'Billy,' he exclaimed, 'I never killed black fellow, nor black fellow's lubra. My sheep were carried off, as I supposed by the dingoes. I wished to poison them, but your people took the meat, and—and—they died!'

King Billy shook his head incredulously. 'White fellow jolly big gammon!' said he. 'Him no good. Him take black fellow's land; what for black fellow no take white fellow's meat? Eh! you sabey? (understand, from the French *savoir.*) Many moons, long way back, no white fellow here den. Den black fellow hab plenty land, plenty meat, plenty fish; now um all gone. Ah!' he continued, the remembrance of his wrongs, real and supposed, lighting up his eyes with the wild gleam of passion—'King Billy hab um plenty lubra, plenty piccaninny, plenty much good. White fellow take um all. What for dat? By-by, black fellow more sabey—kill white fellow—take um land—take um jumbuck (sheep)—take um lubra—take um piccaninny—take um eberyting. Den King Billy hab lilly white piccaninny lubra. What you say dat, white fellow? Ugh!' And with a loud yell, the excited savage bounded away. In vain Courtney endeavoured to pursue him; he had disappeared in the gloom, and would not be found. With a heavy heart, Tom wended his way home. The black's words boded evil, and his concluding sentences certainly sounded very like a menace. Was darling Clara, bonny golden-haired Clara, meant by the little white piccaninny? He determined to keep careful watch, and duly cautioned Mrs Courtney not to allow the child out of her sight.

Some months flew by, and nothing more was heard of the savage, who, in common with all his race, held aloof from the spot which had proved so fatal to their countrymen. Courtney began to shake off the fears that had oppressed him, and somewhat relaxed his vigilance. At last he had occasion to visit a distant part of the colony. He had heard of some fine unoccupied land in the interior; and desirous of quitting scenes that pained his sensitive mind, he resolved on a personal inspection. After an absence of only four days, he returned, to find his home in confusion. The blow he so much dreaded had fallen upon him—Clara was lost. She had been permitted to play in the garden, at the rear of the house; and when sought at eventide, had disappeared, none knew whither. No cries had been heard, nor were any traces of her flight apparent.

Courtney's suspicions fell upon King Billy and the blacks. On inquiry, he found that none of the natives had been seen on the run. But there were no wild beasts in the country capable of attacking the child, nor was it at all probable that any of the European settlers had taken her away. To make sure, however, Courtney and his men rode to all the neighbouring stations, and obtaining no tidings, he hurried into Melbourne for advice and assistance.

He seemed stunned by the calamity that had befallen him, a calamity increased by the dangerous illness of his wife, whom the loss of the child had utterly prostrated. I therefore took the affair entirely into my own hands, and after a hasty consultation with the authorities, arranged our plan of operations. By dint of bribery, we obtained the services of two skilful trackers, natives of the Werribee tribe; from the magistrates we procured the assistance of three constables; and a trifling douceur induced one of the most expert bushmen in the district—he was popularly known by the sobriquet of Jim the Barber—to join the party in pursuit.

Immediately the natives were brought to the garden, they commenced a close examination of the soil. For some time nothing was discovered save the frequent impressions of 'piccaninny's foot;' but on approaching an overgrown and neglected portion of the garden, immediately adjoining the fence, the trackers, pointing thereto, exclaimed: 'Black fellow's foot dere.' Then, by pantomimic gestures, they gave us to understand that one of the natives had crouched amongst the rank vegetation. Doubtlessly, there it was that the wily savage lay in ambush until his prey—the unsuspecting child—came within reach of his remorseless grasp.

From this point the blacks followed the track with unerring sagacity. It led right into the heart of the Dandenongs. Not a trace of the fugitives could our civilised eyes detect; yet was the whole course of their flight accurately revealed to us. Each halt, and leap, and every resting-place—the water-hole whereat they had stopped to drink—the embers of the fire whereby they had paused a brief space: all were described with a vividness that was quite startling. At one place it seemed that the poor child had endeavoured to escape from her grim captor, for the track diverged in an extraordinary manner, and the guides exclaimed: 'Piccaninny run bery much; black fellow run um more!' Amongst the tangled scrub of a wild mountain glen, the trackers picked up a tiny morocco shoe. Courtney at once recognised it as having belonged to his child, and carefully deposited the precious relic in his most secure pocket.

The track became fresher as we proceeded. Crossing the Dandenongs, we came to Woori Yaloak Creek, a tributary of the Yarra-yarra river; and here we received the first check. No footprints were traceable on the further bank, and daylight failing us, we were compelled to halt for the night.

In the morning, a more rigid scrutiny was adopted. Our natives separated, and one pursued the upward, one the downward course of the stream. For about an hour we awaited the result in anxious silence. At length one of the scouts returned, without having discovered any sign of the chase, and again we strove to subdue our impatience till the other native should reappear. Another hour elapsed, yet he came not. Tired of waiting, the other went in quest of him, and quickly came running back, his features contorted with horror and affright. In a scrubby gully, not more than half a mile distant, he had found the corpse of the missing man. He was lying in a recumbent position, as though he had been slain whilst in an attitude of observation, and the fatal spear yet quivered in the death-wound. Near by were the remains of a fire. 'Black fellow sleepa dere,' said our remaining tracker; and the tantalising reflection forced itself upon us, that we had passed the night almost within hail of Courtney's child.

From this place our guide led us over stony ranges, where our progress was greatly retarded by the difficulty of identifying the track, so that at mid-day we were but little in advance of our starting-point. Soon after, we emerged into a fine open plain, dotted with clumps of silvery acacias, and bounded by a dense forest of stringy-bark and boxwood trees. As we slowly followed the tracker, I caught a glimpse of a dark object in the extreme distance, which I instinctively recognised as the object of our pursuit. He was cautiously stealing from bush to bush, apparently, however, unconscious of our presence in his vicinity.

Communicating my discovery to Courtney, we set spurs to our horses and galloped over the plain. The savage's quick ear caught the sound of our horses' hoofs, and finding himself discovered, he boldly quitted his leafy shelter, and ran, with amazing speed, towards the ranges.

Our excitement now became intense. A heap of clothing which fluttered in the black's arms as he fled, told the bereaved father that his lost child was before him, and feverish with renewed hope, he urged his horse to its utmost speed—in vain! The fleet savage gained the shelter of the forest, and there easily contrived to elude us.

To follow without a clue would have been useless. There was nothing for it, therefore, but to wait until our native guide came up, and then recommence the tedious process of tracking the course, step by step. A rock, a tree, the scrubby undergrowth itself, would have sufficed to conceal the fugitive from our unpractised eyes, though not from the sharpened senses of the Werribee scout. But the chase was soon over. In a few minutes we entered upon a little open glade, sloping down to some water-holes, around which were encamped a great number of natives. The black had regained the main body of his tribe.

When we came in sight, a great shouting and running indicated some unusual commotion in the camp. Our guide crept stealthily round the valley to observe their movements, and on returning, caused no little alarm. So far as we could comprehend him, his 'black fellow much break um piccaninny,' accompanied as it was by horrible contortions of the facial muscles, could only be interpreted in a manner which chilled our hearts within us. We were well acquainted with the cannibal propensities of the aborigines, and a terrible fear blanched every cheek and paralysed each tongue. A cry as of suppressed pain burst from Courtney's lips, and the anguish depicted on his countenance was distressing to behold. Yet I could not attempt to console him—my emotion was too deep for the shallow hypocrisy of simulated hope.

Recovering from the first shock of this intelligence, he made a motion as of advancing. I had anticipated this, and restrained him. It would have been madness for a few Europeans—we were only five in number—to attack two hundred ferocious savages. If the child was yet alive, I urged, we might possibly obtain her by exciting their cupidity, or by stratagem, but could not possibly hope to do so by force. Thus I soothed him for the time at least; but not until Jim the Barber had volunteered to enter the camp, and obtain certain information. 'I know the heathens too well to be afeared of 'em,' said he; 'only you keep out of sight, and I'll make 'em believe there's half a thousand men in the scrub here.'

Accordingly, he was empowered to offer any quantity of beads, and blankets, and rum, and such other commodities as the blacks best love, for the ransom of the captive child.

After enduring suspense, as we best could, for a period of time really short, but which appeared interminable, Jim returned. To our great joy, he assured us that Clara was alive and uninjured, save that her clothes had been stripped from her, and partitioned amongst the native children, a circumstance to which, no doubt, the alarming statement of our scout referred. Having relieved our minds by this information, Jim proceeded first to damp our hopes by declaring that his attempts at negotiation had proved unsuccessful, and then to revive them by stating that some of the blacks seemed favourable to the proposed interchange.

Courtney, tremulous with desperate anxiety, refused to listen to any advice which included further delay. 'My child is yonder,' he said, 'in the hands of cruel savages. She lives now; to-morrow, perhaps'—— He looked, but could not speak the horrid thought. 'Shall I stand idly by, and make no effort to save her? I go to the rescue, if I go alone. If I do not return, will you settle my affairs, and send my wife home—to England?'

'Nay,' I replied, 'if you are determined to go, we will all accompany you, although it is really only seeking our most certain destruction.'

All argument having thus failed to counteract the pleadings of nature, we were about to set off in a body, when a new actor appeared on the scene. This was a 'gin,' or black woman, from the native camp. Partly by signs, partly by such broken English as she could utter, she gave us to understand that she was susceptible of the seductive influences of bribery, and that, in consideration of our bestowal upon her of such valuables as we had in our immediate possession, she would surreptitiously deliver Clara into our hands. Accordingly, we mustered rings, watches, knives, tobacco, and all the coin in our pockets, and laid them before her, intimating that upon our reception of the child safe and uninjured, the whole should be her prize. She demanded, in addition, the gilt buttons from my own coat, and a red serge shirt in which the Barber had indued his upper person; and these trifles being conceded, much more to her own satisfaction than that of the owners, the bargain was concluded. One condition, however, she insisted on: none but the father was to be present when she brought the child. She appeared to apprehend some kind of treachery, and by neither persuasion nor intimidation could we induce her to yield this point. Reluctantly, therefore, and not without secret misgivings, I endorsed Courtney's eager promise, that he should be left alone to receive his lost treasure.

By the time this arrangement was concluded, it was near sundown; and the 'gin' left us, after intimating that she would return with Clara when the moon was over a particular tree. She lingered awhile to see that we were actually retreating; and then, by a circuitous route, regained the camp.

We halted at the skirts of the wood. My distrust of the natives rendered me very apprehensive of danger to Courtney. What if it were all a ruse? True, he was well armed; but if his life was sought, he would not be aware of the presence of his enemies until the death-blow had been struck. Yet to return would probably frustrate all his fond hopes, by deterring the wily 'gin' from approaching. How to act in this emergency, I knew not; and I turned to consult with Jim the Barber.

To my surprise, he had disappeared, none knew how or whither. He had lagged somewhat behind in our retrograde march; and it at once occurred to me that he had probably been despatched by the noiseless weapons of the natives.

I now felt assured that treachery was meditated. I looked towards the moon: it appeared to be over the appointed tree. Come what might, I resolved to return; and calling on the constables to follow, I at once turned on our track, and made for the place of rendezvous. At that moment, the sharp crack of a gun reverberated through the woods, and, oh how bitterly I repented my imprudence in consenting to leave Courtney alone!

We hurried onwards yet more rapidly, and in a few seconds, Courtney and the Barber with the rescued child came rushing breathlessly through the scrub. Without a question, or a word of explanation, we joined them, and urged our way to the spot where the horses were picketed. As we mounted, a loud yell—the combined outburst of a hundred savage throats—apprised us that we were pursued; but swiftly as the aborigines of Australia can run, we knew that there was little chance of their overtaking our fleeter steeds. Our black guide shifted for himself, after his own fashion, and the next day appeared safe and sound at Glenferny, to claim the promised reward.

For ourselves, we never halted nor drew rein until we had thoroughly out-distanced the blacks. The next morning we had the satisfaction of placing little Clara in the arms of her desponding mother.

It appeared that Courtney was duly visited by the black 'gin.' She came alone. 'Where is my child?' he asked.

'Piccaninny by-by,' she replied. 'You no gammon?'

Courtney produced the promised treasures, and laid them on the ground. Then she retired awhile; and returned leading the poor child, who, stripped of all her clothing, and terribly frightened, no sooner recognised her father than she ran towards him with eager delight.

As he strained her to his breast, a stalwart black stepped from the shadow of the trees, and confronted them.

'Bad white fellow kill King Billy's piccaninny,' he exclaimed, for it was indeed himself. 'What for King Billy no kill white fellow?'

The spear quivered in his grasp. Little Clara clung shrieking to her father; so that, ere he could have disengaged himself, he must have fallen a victim to the black man's vengeance; when a musket-ball, aimed by an unseen hand, suddenly changed the position of affairs. King Billy reeled and fell to the earth, mortally wounded, and the spear dropped pointless from his paralysed hand.

Courtney's deliverer was Jim the Barber. Convinced that some foul-play was intended, he had quietly slipped away from our party, and wended his way back to the place of meeting. There he arrived just as the black started from the bush; and it being, as he observed himself, 'no time to stand on ceremony,' he immediately fired the shot which terminated King Billy's career, and saved Tom Courtney's life. I need scarcely say that he was gratefully and adequately rewarded.

The associations connected with Glenferny rendered that locality so distasteful to Courtney, that, shortly after these events, he removed into the interior. Even there, distorted versions of the poisoning at 'No-good' frequently pained his sensitive mind, and he eventually retired to England. In his quiet Devonshire villa he regained a portion of his former tranquillity, and often relates, with a kind of melancholy pleasure, the perilous adventure that befell his handsome Clara in the wild Australian bush.

Many years have elapsed since the date of the events which I have recorded; the white man has planted his foot firmly on the soil of Port Phillip, and the aborigine has receded before him. To the latter, the advance of civilisation has been productive of unmixed evil; European rum and European disease have done their work with frightful certainty and unparalleled celerity. The black population are yearly, nay, daily decreasing in numbers. In lieu of the vigorous savage of former days, a squalid and enfeebled type alone remains. No longer the native camp resounds, as of yore, with the clamour of healthy children; for the fountain of existence has been poisoned at its very source, so that, in all probability, the black man of Port Phillip—the scourge and the dread of the early settler—will be unknown, save by traditions such as these, even to the next generation.

GUNPOWDER.

Gunpowder is undoubtedly the most essential aid in war. It is true that we may kill people by means of knives, swords, bayonets, and other weapons, but the cleanest method of destroying our foe is certainly by the aid of gunpowder. In the present uncertain state of affairs, it appears to be considered no longer cowardly or ridiculous to suppose that an *attempt* may be made to invade England; therefore there may be some of us who will have to burn the composition called gunpowder, and in our country's defence. There may also be others who may pass from this world in consequence of the expanding force of the same composition. It may, therefore, not be generally uninteresting if we offer a few remarks upon gunpowder.

Gunpowder is an explosive propellant composed of saltpetre, sulphur, and charcoal; these three ingredients are mixed in slightly different proportions, according to the practice in different countries. In England, 75 parts of saltpetre, 10 of sulphur, and 15 of charcoal, form the composition; whilst the French employ 75 parts of saltpetre, 12½ of sulphur, and 12½ of charcoal. Much doubt exists as to the period of the discovery of gunpowder. It is usually believed that a German monk named Schwartz, or the black, was the discoverer; but there is also evidence that our own countryman, Roger Bacon, who lived fifty-six years before Schwartz, was well acquainted with the composition. There is, moreover, in the university of Oxford a treatise, entitled *Liber Ignium*, written by one Marcus Græcus in the ninth century. This book describes a composition of fireworks composed of 2 pounds of charcoal, 1 pound of sulphur, and 6 pounds of saltpetre—a composition which is much stronger than many sorts of gunpowder which are now made.

Saltpetre, or nitre, as it is also called, is a composition of nitric acid with a vegetable alkali. It is never found pure, but is usually contaminated with other salts and earthy matter. It is found in large quantities in India, and is imported into this country in bags, each of which contains about three-quarters of a hundredweight. Before being fitted for gunpowder, the saltpetre requires to be 'refined.' This is usually performed in three separate houses, which are respectively called the boiling-house, the crystallising-house, and the melting-house. The boiling-house is that wherein it undergoes the first process. In this there are a number of copper pans, each of which is filled with pure spring or distilled water and the impure nitre, which is called 'grough nitre;' 10 gallons of water to 1 cwt. of nitre are considered the correct proportions. The bottom of the copper pan is prevented from becoming too hot by a false bottom, and thus the saltpetre does not burn. A man attends two or three pans during the boiling, and skims off all the impurities which rise to the top. After the composition has boiled for about an hour, nearly 100 gallons more water are put into the copper, at the rate of about 1⅓ gallons per minute: this causes the scum to rise more freely The composition is then boiled a few hours more, and filtered through filtering-bags and along a trough into crystallising pans, which are placed in the crystallising-house. A cover is next placed over each pan, and the saltpetre adheres in long crystals to the side of the pan. Thirty-six hours are allowed for the crystals to form, after which the water is poured from the pans, and the saltpetre is said to be single refined. The crystals are then reboiled, the composition skimmed, and the crystals allowed to reform as before. About 400 or 500 pounds of these crystals are then put into cast-iron melting-pots, and the saltpetre is melted and brought to a heat of about 800 degrees of Fahrenheit. When it is sufficiently hot to set paper on fire, the fire is allowed to go out, and the nitre is occasionally skimmed with the ladles. When cool, it forms into cakes in each pan, is then broken by mallets, and is ground into powder at the mill.

Sulphur is refined by two processes—namely, by fusion and by sublimation. In the first, the sulphur is broken very small before it is put into a melting-pot. The pot is previously made warm and oiled, and the sulphur is stirred until it melts, which it does at 218 degrees of Fahrenheit. After some time, the fire is raked out, and the sulphur allowed to cool, the surface being occasionally skimmed to take off the impurities which may rise, the greater part of which, however, sink to the bottom. The sulphur when cool forms cakes, which are broken up and remelted. After two meltings, the sulphur is considered fit to be used for gunpowder. The sulphur is 'sublimed' by being put into a cast-iron pot, from which a pipe conveys it when in a state of vapour from the pot to a dome of brick. This dome is made air-tight, and the fire is then lighted under the pot containing the sulphur: when heated, the sulphur passes off in vapour through the pipe into the dome, which being colder than the pipe, causes the sulphur to fall to the floor in a powder.

Wood is converted into charcoal in what is called a cylinder-house. It is first stripped of its bark, and stacked for some time, so as to become perfectly dry, and is then cut into lengths of about two feet; a number of these are put into a set of cylinders, under which a fire is lighted; in about four or five hours, the wood becomes heated, and the tar and pyroligneous acid are driven off, down pipes left open for the purpose. The charcoal is allowed to cool before it is exposed to the air; it is then withdrawn from the cylinders, and put into the stove.

Having obtained the three ingredients, the next process is to mix them. Thirty-one pounds, eight ounces, of saltpetre; four pounds, three ounces, and three drams, of sulphur; and six pounds, four ounces, thirteen drams of charcoal—making in all forty-two pounds, or a charge, is then transferred by littles at a time to a mixing-machine. This consists of a wooden tub, with a shaft passing through it, to which are attached a number of fliers, in the shape of a knife-blade. The machine is then set in motion, the tub revolving in a contrary direction for about five minutes, when the composition is thoroughly mixed.

The next process is called the amalgamating or incorporating, and is perhaps the most important of any; for upon the correct amalgamation of the various component parts, the strength of the composition greatly depends. It has been found that the proportions of 75 parts nitre, 10 sulphur, and 15 charcoal, give the best explosive compound; but when these three are mixed, and have been worked during several hours under the mill-stones, it would be almost impossible to obtain these exact proportions in every grain, or even in every handful of the gunpowder; we might, for instance, find 80 parts of nitre, 10 sulphur, and 10 charcoal. It is therefore necessary to pay the greatest attention to 'incorporating,' so as to obtain a thorough amalgamation of the various parts.

The buildings in which this operation is carried on are called the 'gunpowder mills.' The machinery works two large stone-wheels, called runners, which are six or seven feet in diameter, from one to two feet thick, and weigh from three to four tons. These runners pass over a circular stone-bed over which the mixed composition is placed; two pieces of wood, called ploughs, pass round the bed, and keep the composition in the track of the stones. In this process, a charge of forty-two pounds is placed under the runners, and about two or three pints of water, more or less, according to the state of the atmosphere, are poured over the charge. This charge is allowed to remain from two to three hours under the stones, when it is called 'mill-cake.' It should then be about three-fourths of an inch thick; and when broken, should be free from specks, and of a dark grayish-black colour. The colour, however, depends upon the charcoal which has been used. If willow charcoal be part of the composition, the colour ought to be an ashen gray; if made with alder charcoal, it ought to be of a brown cast; if made with black dogwood charcoal, the colour ought to be a decided brown. Alder, willow, and dogwood are considered the best for making charcoal which is intended for gunpowder.

In the 'mill,' the greatest amount of practical knowledge is required, for unless the man who attends the mill has a knowledge of how much water to put to the charge, and at what period the powder is fit to be taken from under the stones, it is impossible that the powder can ever be of a superior quality. The great risk of explosion lies in consequence of the stone-runners being separated from the stone-beds only by the charge of composition, which is merely half an inch thick. If by any chance the composition should become removed, the runners would come in contact with the bed, and a spark be probably produced which would explode the charge. Great care is necessary when selecting the runners and bed to take only such stones as have the smallest quantity of pyrites or flints, as it is from these that the production of sparks is most to be apprehended. It is usually considered that the composition which comes from the mills, and which is now called gunpowder, is in its strongest form. The processes through which it afterwards passes diminish its strength, but increase its lasting qualities.

The next step is called 'pressing.' This is for the purpose of giving additional hardness, which is essential to durability, besides which the powder would suffer a rapid deterioration from the atmosphere, and the friction of transport would separate the three ingredients, in consequence of their different specific gravity, were they not pressed firmly together. The mill-cake is broken down between two sets of metal rollers furnished with teeth, and is then taken to a hydraulic press, which gives a pressure of about 120 tons upon the square foot.

The gunpowder is now ready to be converted into grain, which is done at a building called a corning-house. The process is called 'granulating.' This is performed by means of a machine in which there are three sets of cylindrical teeth-cutting rollers, formed from gun-metal. The teeth of each set are of different sizes, the first, or upper, being the coarsest or furthest apart, and the lower being the smallest. The 'press-cake' is first broken into pieces by means of a wooden mallet, and is passed between the first set of rollers. Here it is crushed into grains of various sizes, and then passed into a spiral reel, the revolutions of which force the grain along. This reel is covered with copper wire of two sizes, part being for the fine grain, and part for the large grain. Such pieces as will not go through the wire are called 'chucks,' and are passed between a second pair of rollers, and again crushed. The various-sized grain is thus obtained.

The dusting and glazing is the next process. When the fine grain is brought from the corning-house, it generally contains about 20 per cent. of dust. To clear it from this, the powder is placed in reels, which are made to revolve about twenty-four times in a minute. About twenty-four pounds at a time are put into the hoppers of the coarse reels, and the reels being slightly inclined to the horizontal, allow the dust to fall through into the reel-case, whilst the grain runs to the lower end. About 300 pounds of fine grain powder are then placed in each of a set of barrels, which are then made to rotate on their axis about thirty-five times in a minute. The grains of powder continue falling over each other, and thus rub off the soft or angular parts, and give to the powder a dark shining appearance. This process is considered to weaken the powder, because the sharp angles permit the grain to ignite more quickly than it would when they become rounded.

It is a curious fact that, during the operation of glazing, the large grain turns to a grayish colour, whilst the fine grain becomes of a deep black colour.

The gunpowder thus far completed is afterwards subjected to various testing operations, which it might be tedious to describe. Though apparently free from moisture, it in reality contains a considerable amount of water, which is driven off by heat. In a warm climate, a simple exposure to the sun would be sufficient, but in our moist atmosphere it is usual to place the powder in a room which is heated by steam-pipes, the powder being exposed in trays. As the best gunpowder is extremely liable to absorb moisture, it is necessary that the barrels in which it is placed should be well seasoned and as air-tight as possible. The barrels are capable of containing a hundred pounds, but only ninety pounds are put into each barrel, so as to admit the powder to be shaken up occasionally by rolling, and thus prevent its getting lumpy. The barrels are filled at the storehouses, and marked according to the powder they contain. The marks are F. G. and L. G., in red, for powder of the best quality; R. A. for rifle arm; R. S. for restored powder; and F. G. and L. G., in white, for powder of an inferior sort. Gunpowder may often be 'restored' when it is damp, but when it is too far gone, the saltpetre is extracted by boiling and filtering.

The average cost of the ingredients of gunpowder is about L.40 per ton—namely, saltpetre, about L.23 per ton; sulphur, L.6 per ton; charcoal, L.11 per ton.

The only manufactory which the government now possesses is situated at Waltham Abbey, in Essex, which locality is reached by means of the Eastern Counties Railway. The visitor there finds himself amidst scenes of the most peaceful character: meadows, in which the cattle are quietly grazing; streams, along the banks of which Izaak Walton would have found his paradise; and paths twining through woods of willow or alder, the nursery-bed of future stocks of charcoal. Occasionally the appearance of a funereal-looking machine, like a floating-hearse, from which there comes a strong smell of squibs, warns the visitor that all is not peace. Then probably across his path will come a man or two whose incrustation leads him to set them down as chimney-sweeps taking their pleasure. Soon the rumbling of machinery-wheels and the splash of water are heard, and a mill is approached. The visitor's feet are now carefully encased in leather shoes, to prevent the chance of any grit or stones being brought into the building, and the mysteries of Gunpowder begin to be explained.

We can readily believe how men who, day by day and week by week, are dealing with this black compound, at length become careless and indifferent, and, consequently, at last meet an untimely end. In worldly matters, and in the usual proceedings of everyday life, we have our warnings; a slight accident may prevent a greater; but here it is perfect safety, or the being blown to atoms. Then, when some downright carelessness has been committed, and each witness has departed in fragments over the neighbouring trees, it is not unusual to call upon some profound philosopher to explain the cause of an accident the effect of which alone is visible. Thus science sometimes prevents the workmen of other manufactories from deriving a useful lesson; for the accident, instead of being proved, as was most probable, to have arisen from a lucifer in the pocket or a spark, is by these learned individuals attributed to some wonderful chemical paradox, of even the elements of which the workmen are totally ignorant.

As an example of the recklessness which is at length felt by those who are in the habit of entering buildings of this description, we will relate the following anecdote, with which we were furnished by an eye-witness.

In the early part of the present century, one of the workmen belonging to the royal gunpowder establishment at Waltham Abbey, on returning from his dinner, was, contrary to orders, smoking a pipe. When he approached a building called the Gloom-store, where the powder was dried, and which was situated on the Horse-mill Island, he put the pipe in his waistcoat pocket without extinguishing the tobacco. Soon after, it was observed by one of the workmen called 'Old Ben Wall,' who was remarkable for his coolness and courage, that the man's pocket was smoking. He knew that if he called his attention to it, the result might be still more dangerous, as the man was just about to enter the building; he therefore called him on to the platform close to the river, and, with a well-directed push, sent him sprawling into the water, and thus probably saved the lives of many of the men.

In the year 1780, an explosion of a corning-house took place at Faversham, where there are at this day some extensive gunpowder mills. This corning-house was situated on a small island at the foot of a hill, known as Davington Hill. The building was totally destroyed, and six men lost their lives. One, the foreman of the corning-house, named Stubberfield, was blown upwards of 200 yards, and into a stream. The body was not disfigured nor the clothes destroyed. The bodies of the other five were too much mutilated to be recognised. The leg of one was sent by the force of the explosion more than a quarter of a mile, and lodged amongst the branches of an apple-tree, where it was not discovered until some days afterwards. This explosion caused the greatest destruction, not only to the surrounding buildings, but also to two cottages, one of which was situated at the foot of Davington Hill. This cottage was built of lath and plaster; the effect of the explosion forced the lath and plaster from between the timbers in the wall of the house. A poor woman, with her infant child, was in bed in one of the rooms of this cottage, and the front part of the rooms being shaken down, thus shewing the house in section, the woman could be seen from the road by the passers-by. She was, however, unhurt, save by the fright which had been caused to her by the fall of the front of her house. The other cottage, called Walnut-tree House, was partially protected by two large walnut-trees; these acted as traverses, and broke in a measure the shock of the explosion; still, the cottage was so shaken that it was necessary to pull it down. The whole of the houses in the town of Faversham were much damaged, the machinery of the mills situated even at a distance from the explosion being thrown quite 'out of gear.'

After this explosion, the government bought some land called the Marsh, at a greater distance from the town of Faversham. In a few years, another calamity took place at the 'Marsh Works,' in the building where the powder is dried. In this building there were about eighty barrels of powder, when, from some unexplained cause, the whole exploded, and seven men were killed.

In November 1811, there was a very severe explosion at a place called the Lower Island, situated between the town of Waltham Abbey and the site of the Enfield small-arm manufactory. The corning and press houses were both completely destroyed, and eight men were killed. A magazine filled with gunpowder was only a short distance from the corning-house; it was protected by a brick arched roof, and an outer roof of slate, and was protected by a mass of brick-work called a traverse. One of the officers connected with the gunpowder establishment had upon this occasion a very providential escape. He purposed visiting these very buildings, and was on his way towards them, when he was met by one of the foremen, who detained him on business about a quarter of an hour. After leaving him, and when within half a mile or so of the corning-house, he was alarmed by hearing violent shrieks which proceeded from a cottage near at hand. He stopped to ascertain the cause, and found that there was a woman in a fit; after giving some directions to the neighbours, and sending for a medical man, he again started for the corning-house, but had scarcely advanced a dozen paces from the cottage, when even the ground upon which he was standing was shaken by the terrific explosion of the building to which he was advancing, and in which he would undoubtedly have been, had it not been for his double detention. Hurrying forward, he was the first man at the scene of the disaster, and he soon observed that a much more fatal occurrence would soon take place unless some steps were taken, for upon the roof of a magazine near was a large piece of blazing timber, which had been blown thence by the first explosion. Some thousands of barrels of gunpowder were in the magazine, whilst just across the stream, and ignorant of their danger, upwards of a hundred people had assembled to inquire into the effect of the explosion. Had this powder exploded, scarce one of these people could have escaped. The only person who was capable of affording assistance was a carpenter of the name of Paton, who was requested by the officer to run for a ladder. Together they climbed upon the building, and removed the burning timber, which they threw into the water close by. They then discovered that the door of the magazine had been blown outwards; and this was refixed with all possible dispatch, as the smoking remains of the corning-house were lying about in all directions. Although the officer and man in question merely did their duty, the man was rewarded by the Board of Ordnance with a present of L.20.

In explosions of this description it is, of course, very difficult to collect the remains of the men. All that could be found, however, were deposited in eight coffins, and the lids being nailed down, they were, as nearly as could be guessed, said to contain the bodies of the respective men. After the supposed bodies had been interred some weeks, the body of one of the men, less disfigured than that of any of the others, was found in a stream about three miles from the scene of destruction. The body had been blown about fifteen yards into the tail-stream of the mill, and had drifted down to the place where it was found; and this caused many of the relatives much uneasiness, for they began to doubt whether the coffins which they had followed to the grave really did contain the mortal remains of those whom they had loved.

THE BOHEMIANS OF PARIS.

It is generally known that by the name of 'Bohemians' the Parisians designate those numberless poets, artists, sculptors, and journalists, who live in a land bordered on all sides by poverty, and situated under all the latitudes of hope. It is less well known when and how that name originated, and that information we propose to give.

About twenty years ago, seven young fellows, poets, students, and artists, formed a small society. One evening one of them suddenly exclaimed: 'We are the seven capital sins.' This idea was received with applause, and the senior of the band then spoke as follows: 'The moment to form a new sect has arrived, in the temples of which idleness and fantasy shall reign. You have all certainly met on the highways those bands of gipsies who come from the land of the sun, and are called Bohemians. These children of liberty migrate wherever their fancy leads them; they have no care for the morrow; they eat and drink what chance may bring them, and sleep under the first green tree which offers. They are the Bohemians of the highways; let us be the Bohemians of the cities.' This speech was greeted with three rounds of cheers, and on that day the realm of Bohemia was founded.

The seven Bohemians met every evening in a lonely coffee-house, to which they had given the high-sounding name of Rafaller's Club. If they by chance met in society, one asked the other, 'Are you going to the club?' and young French ladies looked with awe upon these elegant gentlemen who certainly risked fifty louis at play.

This club was of a very extraordinary kind, and discussed the most tremendous paradoxes; it was the fatherland of eclecticism, and its list of members could boast a Mohammedan, and even a fakir. Celebrities were not admitted, and if a member had so far forgotten himself as to become distinguished in art, politics, or literature, he was inexorably erased from the golden book. This club took only five seconds to cut up a celebrity, and ten minutes to build up a new social system. Every evening, witticisms, *bon mots*, and *calembours*, the only commodity which was not scarce among them, were lavishly wasted, afterwards collected by play-writers, and generally ascribed by the public to old Talleyrand.

One evening, a solicitor suddenly entered the club, and informed them that one of the seven had inherited forty thousand francs. This communication was received with such a shout of applause as deafened the solicitor. A council was immediately held to determine what should be done with this fabulous sum. One of them proposed that a great public festival should be given to the French people; another, to buy a principality in Arcadia; a third, a journey to Italy. 'Italiam!' exclaimed the seven in a breath, as did once the companions of Æneas; and a week afterwards they were lounging under the azure sky of Naples, lying in the grass of Ischia and Capri, and sunning themselves on the Posilippo, or lighting their cigars at the glowing stones thrown up from the crater of Vesuvius; and there they lived in a grand style for three months, until one fine morning they awoke without a bajocco left of all the forty thousand francs which were to last for ever. They then bethought themselves of returning to France; but as a band of seven empty stomachs could not well march together without starving out the country through which they passed, they separated, and agreed to meet six weeks later at Rafaller's Club. Then followed the Odysseys of seven careless young adventurers. One of them who could not separate himself from the beautiful gulf of Naples, remained at an inn in the neighbourhood, and lived upon the proceeds of his clothes, which he sold to a Jew from day to day. 'Mine host,' who had watched with anxiety the evolutions of this fugitive wardrobe, came one morning to his guest and offered him a hundred francs with which to return to France, and which he should repay him after his arrival in Paris; but the Bohemian was too proud to accept this sum without having honestly gained it. Being somewhat of a painter, he therefore took the portraits of the whole family of the landlord, who afterwards accompanied him on board the ship, where he parted from him with the utmost regret. Such is the charm of youth and genius that even the heart of a Neapolitan innkeeper may be touched by it!

The Bohemians are now no longer confined to Rafaller's Club; there are some who have a position in society and an account at their banker's, but they are nevertheless Bohemians by nature. Such was Balzac, and such is Alexandre Dumas. Balzac was very conscientious in paying his debts, but it is just as true that no man ever had more singular ones than he. A friend once meeting him in the street, invited him to dine with him at a certain restaurant. 'Pray excuse me,' was Balzac's reply; 'I am on bad terms with the landlord, for I owe him eight hundred francs for cutlets.' Sometimes he had very eccentric whims; amongst others, he once took it into his head to have a saloon entirely furnished in white satin, and with an immense chandelier pendent from the ceiling. Two friends who visited him in the evening found him pacing to and fro in the apartment, murmuring: 'Who is to pay for the white satin?' The two gentlemen admired his extravagantly furnished saloon, but wanted the chandelier lighted before they could fully express their opinion upon the subject. Forty candles were soon burning, and the effect was magnificent; but Balzac went on muttering: 'Who is to pay for the white satin?' At that moment, a knock at the door was heard; it was a publisher, who wished to see Balzac. 'A publisher!' exclaimed Balzac, 'and forty candles burning! He must pay for it. Throw yourselves on the sofas,' he added to his friends, 'and don't be afraid of soiling them with your boots.' The door opened, the publisher entered, and was dazzled by the splendour of the room; however, Balzac continued pacing composedly to and fro, as if quite accustomed to live amid a Babylonian luxury. He then inquired the publisher's business. 'I should like to publish a novel of yours,' stammered he. 'Ah, indeed,' replied Balzac: 'well, I am very much occupied, very fatigued, but'—— And then he requested the publisher to return on the following day, in order to arrange the matter. 'I owe Providence at least a pound of wax-candles,' exclaimed Balzac, as soon as the publisher was gone. 'He believes, of course, that I burn forty candles every evening; and it is quite obvious that he cannot offer the same sum to a man who burns such a light, as he would to one who works by a dismal lamp. Let us extinguish the chandelier; my satin is paid for.'

Alexandre Dumas has wasted millions in a few years. In Monte-Cristo, a country-house in the neighbourhood of St Germain, furnished with all possible refinement and luxury, he kept open table for all his friends, and this was sometimes taken advantage of by strangers. One day, M. Alphonse Karr, who has since quitted Bohemia, and become a gardener, on seeing a person at table indulging in a very remarkable manner, inquired his name of Dumas; he replied: 'I don't know him; he is sure to be a friend of my son.' Karr then asked the son, who answered: 'I don't know him; he is sure to be a friend of my father.' Dumas the Elder was very choice in the selection of paper-hangings, and if no longer pleased with the design of one which he had bought perhaps only a week before, he took his pointed cane, bored holes in the paper, and entirely spoiled it. On the following day he selected another, which soon shared the same fate. Some years afterwards, he was very much reduced in circumstances. Once, on the occasion of a society of young fellows, which included Dumas the son, dining at the Maison Dorée in Paris, when the bill for the dinner was handed to them, it was discovered that not one of them had the wherewithal to pay it. Dumas alone had a five-franc piece, and, after some consultation, it was agreed that he should step across the road, and fetch some money from his father. He soon returned with his pockets emptier than before; for he had just lent the five francs to his father, to pay a very pressing demand from his cobbler.

One of the oddest Bohemians who ever lived was a man of the name of Cabannon, who, in this civilised century, played tricks which we would only believe to have happened in the *Arabian Nights*. He lived in a hayloft, but on the Boulevards he always appeared most elegantly dressed. He also possessed the livery of a footman, and when courting a lady, would sometimes say: 'Permit me to send you some flowers by my negro.' He then returned into his hayloft, blackened his face and hands, put on his livery, and carried the promised bouquet to the lady, saying: 'My master, M. Cabannon, has the honour of sending these flowers to madame.' On one occasion, a gallantry of this kind cost him his last five francs. The lady to whom he brought the flowers was so charmed with their beauty that she gave him a louis gratuity. Cabannon was thus compelled to accept fifteen francs for his courtesy.

The Bohemians are often very generous. When Benazet, the celebrated croupier, still reigned at the Palais Royal, a Bohemian once won thirty thousand francs in *trente et quarante*. He might have taken the money to a banker, but not knowing one, he kept it in his pocket, and while strolling through the garden of the Palais Royal, he met three of his friends, and at once gave them thirteen thousand francs. 'Eh, well,' he said, after they had parted, 'seventeen thousand francs is an odd sum; I had better go back, and gain three thousand more to make twenty thousand.' Shortly afterwards he returned with a much lighter purse than he had entered with, and possessing, in fact, only twenty-four sous, which he had cautiously laid aside for his dinner; nor did he think of going to those friends to whom he had just given thirteen thousand francs, but went quietly to the restaurant where he usually dined for twenty-four sous.

During the reign of Louis-Philippe, there were many political Bohemians who connected themselves with the parliamentary opposition. Amongst them was one so poor that he could never afford to dine; he went to bed at four o'clock A.M., rose at seven P.M., then dressed, and went into society, where he satisfied his hunger with sandwiches and confectionary; but he principally frequented political balls, where cold chicken and ham were to be had. One day he was asked his opinion on M. Odillon-Barrot. The reply was: 'He has no *pâté de foie-gras*.'

The Bohemian is sometimes ferocious. It happened that the wife of one fell ill. The physician declared she could only be saved by having her hair, which was remarkably long and fine, cut off. 'Then I prefer losing her,' answered the Bohemian; and he really lost her.

Everything is not *couleur de rose* in the merry land of Bohemia; woe to him who treads the stony path with nothing but courage for his stick! Too often he will stop short on the road, and hear around him the mocking laughter of others who have been more clever and fortunate than himself. Instead of being pitied, he will be reproached for his pride and temerity. A Bohemian should be young; it is all very well if his watch is at the pawnbroker's when he is twenty; but if he has reached the age of thirty, the same watch must indicate the smiling hour of success, for a gray-haired Bohemian always risks being confounded with a rogue.

LOVE-LETTERS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Having occasion, a short time since, to consult that vast collection of manuscript at the British Museum known as the Cottonian Library, it was our good-fortune, whilst turning over the pages of a particularly dusty and dropsical folio, to come across a number of carefully flattened-out letters, written, most of them, with wondrous skill and neatness, in a hand in common use about four hundred years ago, and which, upon a more careful investigation, turned out to be certain original love-letters which had heretofore passed between one John Paston and his 'beloved object' Margery Brews; interspersed with missives of a more common-place character, written by their parents and near relatives, and referring to the worldly goods necessary to be settled upon each lover respectively, prior to the favourable termination of their courtship.

The letters themselves appear to have been preserved with great care, as the series is complete, with one trifling exception, from the very commencement of the engagement, to a day or two preceding the marriage; and the fact of the ceremony having been solemnised, is rendered indisputable by a certain chirping epistle, written by the bride's father to his brother, giving an account of the marriage-day. We propose to lay before our readers the more interesting of the letters; and shall merely premise that both lovers were descended from good families in the county of Norfolk, and had the misfortune to live at a distance from one another—the gentleman holding some apparently inferior position at court, while the lady remained at home with her parents. The first letter of the series is from the lady's mother, and is addressed to the intended husband. It is written after a visit to Mr Paston's family, and exhibits the careful mamma evidently anxious to part on very reasonable terms with her disposable daughter:

To my Worshipful Cousin, John Paston, be this Bill delivered.

Cousin—I recommend me unto you, thanking you heartily for the great cheer ye made me, and all my folks, the last time that I was at Norwich, and ye promised me that ye would never break the matter to Margery until such time as ye and I were at a point. But ye have made her such an advocate for you, that I may never have rest night nor day for calling and crying upon to bring the said matter to effect.

And, cousin, upon Friday is St Valentine's Day, and every bird chooseth him a mate; and if it like you to come on Thursday at night, and so purvey you, that ye may abide here till Monday, I trust to God that ye shall so speak to mine husband, and to Margery, that (as I shall pray) we shall bring the matter to a conclusion.

For, cousin, 'it is but a simple oak
That's cut down at the first stroke;'

for ye will be reasonable, I trust to God, which have you ever in His merciful keeping.—By your cousin,

Dame Elizabeth Brews,
otherwise shall be called by God's grace.

February 8, 1477.

It is very much to be regretted that we have no account of the mode adopted in 'popping the question.' It is evident from the next letter, written by the young lady herself, that Mr Paston *did* come down to Topcroft on 'Thursday at night,' and in valentine fashion, or by some other old-English and time-honoured method, discovered the bent of his lady-love's affections. We certainly do not know which to admire most in the following effusion, the lady's anxiety to reconcile her admirer to the small property at her disposal, or the elegance of the verses—doubtless original—contained in her letter:

Unto my Right Well-beloved Valentine, John Paston, Esquire, be this Bill delivered.

Right reverent and worshipful, and my right well-beloved valentine, I recommend me unto you, full heartily desiring to hear of your welfare, which I beseech Almighty God long for to preserve unto His pleasure and your heart's desire.

And if it please you to hear of my welfare, I am not in good health of body nor of heart, nor shall be till I hear from you; for there knows no creature what pain that I endure, and for to be dead I dare it not discover.

And my lady, my mother, hath laboured the matter to my father full diligently, but she can no more get than ye know of, for the which God knoweth that I am full sorry; but if that ye love me, as I trust verily that ye do, ye will not leave me therefore:

And if ye command me to keep me true wherever I go,
I wis I will do all my might you to love and never no mo;
And if my friends say that I do amiss,
They shall not me let so for to do.
Mine heart me bids evermore to love you,
Truly over all earthly thing;
And if they be never so wroth,
I trust it shall be better in time coming.

No more to you at this time; but the Holy Trinity have you in keeping, and I beseech you that this bill be not seen of none earthly creature save only yourself.

And this letter was indited at Topcroft with full heavy heart, by your own Margery Brews.

Topcroft, 1477.

How little did poor Miss Margery Brews imagine, whilst penning the latter part of her letter, that, 382 years after it was written, instead of being 'not seen of none earthly creature,' it would form part of a periodical spread over the whole civilised globe for the edification and amusement of a more advanced, but by no means less love-letter writing generation!

In answer to the letter just transcribed is the first communication we have from the gentleman:

To my Fair Cousin, Margery Brews, these.

I pray God and our sweet Lady to keep you in as fair estate of mind and comfort, dear one, as you are in body and humour, which, if they do, ye shall have none ado about care and weariness.

I would be well content to take you alone, sweet mistress, and meddle nothing with bodily cattel [chattels], but ye know well I be but of mean condition, and many are the charges which marriage bringeth, even though ye and I be ready to do our diligence to spare in all large costs, yet there be daily our men and maids, and in time to come, how many imps God only wotteth.

Strive, therefore, sweeting, that ye get from him at least two hundred, or, if ye may, two hundred and fifty pounds. I know he hath it; and methinketh that if I be not worth so much, we may not come together, nay, not at all, and peradventure I shall go away suddenly; but of this more anon, for I purpose to come presently to Topcroft; and if I come and find the matter no more advanced towards me than heretofore, I will not that my lord and lady busy themselves further, but am no son for them.

And so I commend you ever to God and our Lady, and shall ever be your true liege man,

John Paston.

March 3, 1477.

This cold and 'cavalier' letter is answered by the following delicate effusion:

To my Right Well-beloved Cousin, John Paston, Esquire, be this Letter delivered.

Right worshipful and well-beloved valentine, in my most humble wise, I recommend me unto you; and heartily I thank you for the letter which ye sent me by John Bickerton, whereby I understand and know that ye be purposed to come to Topcroft in short time, and without any errand or matter but only to have a conclusion of the matter betwixt my father and you. I would be most glad of any creature alive so that the matter might grow to effect. And whereas ye say, and if ye come and find the matter no more towards you than ye did aforetime, ye would no more put my father and my lady, my mother, to no cost nor business for that cause a good while after, which causeth my heart to be full heavy; and if that ye come, and the matter take to none effect, then should I be much more sorry and full of heaviness.

And as for myself, I have done in the matter that I can or may, as God knoweth, and I let you plainly understand that my father will no more money part withal in that behalf but an hundred pounds and fifty marks,[*] which is right far from the accomplishment of your desire.

Wherefore, if that ye could be content with that good and my poor person, I would be the merriest maiden on ground; and if ye think not yourself so satisfied, or that ye might have much more good, as I have understood by you before, good, true, and loving valentine, I beseech you that ye take no such labour upon you as to come more for that matter. But let what is be passed, and never more to be spoken of, as I may be your true love and beadwoman* during my life.

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[*] L.33, 6s. 8d.

No more unto you at this time, but Almighty Jesu preserve you both body and soul.—By your valentine,
MARGERY BREWS.

TOPCROFT, 1477.

On the same day as that upon which our last is dated, a servant of Sir John Brews thus writes to Mr Paston:

UNTO MY RIGHT WORSHIPFUL MASTER, JOHN PASTON, ESQUIRE, BE THIS BILL DELIVERED.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL SIR—I recommend me unto you, letting you know, as for the young gentlewoman she oweth you her good heart and love, as I know by the communication that I have had with her for the same.

And, sir, ye know what my master and my lady have proffered with her, 200 marks; and I daresay that her chamber and aurayment shall be worth 100 marks, and I heard my lady say that, and the case required both ye and she should have your board with my lady three years after.

And I understand by my lady that she would that ye should labour the matter to my master, for it should be the better. And I heard my lady say

That it was a feeble oak
That was cut down at the first stroke.

And ye be beholden unto my lady for her good word, for she hath praised you enough.

Sir, like as I promised you, I am your man, and my good-will ye shall have in word and deed.

And Jesu have you in His merciful keeping.—By your man,
THOMAS KELA.

The letter we have already read from Mr Paston to his intended gives us an idea that his character was somewhat cold and mercenary, and this impression is certainly not removed at finding him about this time in the pursuit of another lady, a certain Miss Amry, whom he describes as having 'much estate both in land and other gear,' and for whom he appears for a time to have sacrificed all intentions towards Miss Brews.

Fortunately, however, his new flame was by no means suited to his taste, and in a letter to a friend written shortly after his acquaintance with her, she is described as being 'of low demeanour, and knoweth nothing of comely behaviour; hath large feet, and stinketh in her breath, and is thick, and blurteth out her speech; and,' adds the changeable hero, 'I will have none of her.'

Miss Brews, the 'old original' sweetheart, now comes again upon the field. It is scarcely probable that Mr Paston would, after the receipt of her last letter, have concluded upon marriage with her, had not a certain other circumstance occurred which materially altered the pecuniary relationship existing between the parties. This was none other than a collateral correspondence which had been carried on between the father of the lady and the elder brother of the future bridegroom, which evidently led to certain agreeable proposals on the part of the latter—the nature of which we do not exactly know—upon the making of which a decided change occurs in the general tone of the correspondence between the parties immediately concerned. Thus writes good Mr Paston:

MY OWN SWEET AND FAIR COUSIN—By God's grace all is well settled, and ye have only to say when it pleaseth you to be my loving wife. We may not wait long, for we have long tarried already, and I will that all be well done, and soon; and as for much time, it pleaseth my lady, your mother, that I lodge with you at home, I have none other charge than to deck myself bravely as is meet, and so come to you.

My mother cometh to Topcroft, by the blessing of God, on Saturday seven-night, and my brother also, besides I know not if there be any other. I may not write long to you, fair one, for I write but badly, Christ knoweth; but I will make amends hereafter, as you may well wot.

And so farewell, cousin, that soon shall be wife.—From your true and faithful
J. PASTON.

Jan. 7, 1478.

Then follows a letter to his mother:

TO MY RIGHT WORSHIPFUL MOTHER.—Mother, the matter is in a reasonable good way; and I trust, with God's mercy and with your good help, that it shall take effect better to mine advantage than I told you of at Norwich, for I trow that there is not a kinder woman living than I shall have to my mother-in-law, if the matter take, nor yet a kinder father-in-law than I shall have, though heretofore he hath been hard with me.

All the circumstances of the matter which I trust to tell you at your coming to Topcroft could not be written in three leaves of paper, and ye know my lewd head well enough that I may not write long, wherefore I ferry over all things till I may await on you myself. I shall tun into your place a dozen of ale and bread according against Wednesday. And, mother, at the reverence of God beware that ye be so purveyed for that ye take no cold by the way towards Topcroft, for it is the most perilous march that ever was seen. Jesu preserve you.—Your son and humble servant,
J. PASTON.

TOPCROFT, *March* 8, 1478.

There is yet one other communication from Miss Brews to her affianced husband, written probably on the very eve of marriage, and exhibiting her in a very favourable light, as we humbly opine. But our readers themselves shall judge:

TO MY OWN GOOD LORD AND TRULY BELOVED VALENTINE, THESE.

MINE OWN DEAR LORD—Ye do well to write kindly to me, and as is your wont, to cheer me for the great change, which, though I much dread—as what maiden would not?—I tell you fairly I long for much also, for in honest sort I know that I shall be doing my duty, and what God willeth of me, by tending you, whom I love so extremely, and by making happy him who ever sought mine advantage and honour.

Though we have little estate, we have much affection, and shall ever have, if it please God; and I will alway be your true wife in all reasonable service, to do your lawful behests through life, and ye shall find me meek and willing as is fit, and quiet also; and I pray Christ ye shall in some poor way have me to be an advantage to you in matters which be not carnal, the which, if it may be so, God shall be praised meetly and duly by both of us, now here on earth, and afterward in Heaven. Amen.

And, dear Lord, I would have you come here at once, for we all desire you extremely; and spend not your substance in presents and junkets, the which I neither expect nor desire, but I will have you only who shall soon be my husband.—From your true cousin,
MARGERY BREWS.

One more letter will complete our series; it is the one we have alluded to as coming from the bride's father, and mentioning the wedding:

TO MY RIGHT WORTHY AND ENTIRELY BELOVED BROTHER, WILLIAM PASTON, ESQUIRE, BE THESE DELIVERED.

MY RIGHT ENTIRELY BELOVED BROTHER.—Pleaseth it you to hear that your fair niece, Margery, is now married fairly and happily, and hath to husband one of good learning and condition, howbeit he be but in poor estate at this present.

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* A religious person who spent his or her time in praying for another.

I would heartily that you, my good brother, had been to help us in her bridal, but that ye could not do. We had as comely youth as any the county could bring, and of fair maids many, such as scarce an old man as I am could look much on without blinking; and we have been for four days wondrous merry, and laughed and played in such wise as I never did in my life before exceeding much. And I would to God that my other brats were well disposed of, so that I might live alone with my dame, and not be cumbered about them, but only to make ready for my end, which must soon come to me.

The andirons ye sent, and the ouches from my sister, pleased us hugely, and I pray Jesu that your cost in that matter may be paid back to you, though how I know not; but ye helped to please us by what ye sent, though ye were not able to be with us; so I heartily thank you. I would that ye were even now with us in our poor house, for I am right merry, and yet drinking as young men used to drink; I pray God it turn not to my hurt.—Your own brother and dear friend, WILLIAM BREWS.

So end these old letters. The writers have long since mouldered into dust; the missives themselves have slumbered on the shelves of good old Sir Robert Cotton for nearly a century after being collected from some even then ancient muniment-chest, and now form part of our great national collection. The dried leaf, shut up for many a long year between the pages of the herbarium, emits fragrance when exposed to the air, and, as it seems to us, an odour of quaint and old-fashioned affection yet lingers around these ancient and long-forgotten epistles.

HATS OFF!

WE protest against the 'monstrous regiment' of Hatters. Their power has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. Britons, countrymen, and brothers, let us no longer bow the head to them, for too long have we perspired under their tyranny.

Tyranny all sensible men will feel it to be, for numb must be the skull which has not suffered from the hat. Nevertheless, we have only to let our oppressors understand distinctly that the abominable things they manufacture at present must be for ever done away with, and they will, for their own sake, speedily find out something new, which will reconcile us to them, and more than reconcile us; something which shall be comfortable, something which shall be becoming, something which shall be worthy to be put upon the head of a man; something, too, which shall be reasonable as regards the price of it, and which may be expected to last a reasonable time, as not being liable to be rendered 'shocking bad,' all at once, by a blow or a shower; something, in short, which we shall willingly doff to the maker of it, in token not of reconciliation only, but of gratitude and esteem. Is there, then, among these hatters any man of original genius and bold conception, any *forte tête*, as the French say? If such there be, now is his time. We venture to predict that a revolution in hats must and will soon be; such a man, by standing forward at the head of it, will be sure to cover himself with glory; will have deserved from his contemporaries a civic wreath; and, dying, will descend to a tomb which will be famous to all posterity, as that of the Capulets. Then, with better right than had Wellington and Blucher—neither of whom were boot-makers—to give their names to casings for our lower extremities, will the name of the great Reformer be for ever associated with the covering he shall have invented for the incomparably nobler head. Unless, therefore, all hatters are as mad as an unmeaning proverb would insinuate that they are, some one among them will at once brush up his wits, take Time by the forelock, and till he have produced a head-covering *totus* and *teres*, but not *rotundus*, will allow himself no slothful nap.

No one of ourselves seems willing to strike for emancipation and freedom: we have still to wait for our William Tell who will manfully refuse his homage to the hat. Nay; not only do we thus continue enslaved, but the great majority of us do not feel that they are slaves. What metaphorically is called 'hugging our chains,' is exhibited but too often in the positive admiration with which too many regard their hats; in the tenderness they feel for them; in the pride with which they carry them. They even cumber themselves with that other abominable thing, the umbrella, for the sake of the hat: that which should protect them, they must needs protect. Why not also idolise your boots, and to preserve them from scath and spot, provide yourself with things like inverted umbrellas, to walk abroad in? Nay, why not worship your umbrella itself, and put up a second overhead, to protect the other?

The truth, however, is, that all this reverence for the hat is, like so many other things in our social life, a thing of mere form, and convention, and opinion. I must do as others do, whether I like it or not. It might be my own choice to wear a cocked-hat or a sombrero, a turban or a fool's-cap, but what would my friends say? what would the world say? and, as a climax, what would the street-boys say? The street-boys would run after me, with shouts, in their own horrible way; the world, in its worldly way, would expel me from within it; in his disagreeably friendly way, each dear friend would 'advise me as a friend.' Therefore, in this free country—which is of all European countries, that in which, as regards conventional matters, there is least freedom—I must resign myself, however sorrowfully, to continue for the present the customer of the tyrannical hatter, contrary to my better judgment, and against my will. You will, of course, gather from this that I am a perfect gentleman; knowing, as you do, that if I were not, I should be at liberty to consult my own comfort and my own taste. Were I anything but what I am, I might wear almost anything I chose on my head. You will understand, too, that I am speaking of town-life: in the country, it is happily somewhat different, because there, you know, nobody sees me—except at church; it is of no matter in what frame of mind the inner man may be when I go thither; but were the outer to appear in anything but an orthodox hat, I should be liable to the censure of all the faithful.

Although the respect paid to the hat is thus a mere matter of custom and fashion, hat-reform will not, merely on that account, be the more easily brought about; indeed, institutions of any kind that depend for their existence on custom and fashion only, are generally very tenacious against reform. There being no reason for them other than the woman's one, 'because I choose,' it is useless to assail them with argument. All one can do is to protest against them; and we, having thus protested in the very first words of this article, are not about to enter upon a vain discussion of the question. Our chief object at present is merely to put our protest on record, so that, when the reformation comes, we may receive the honour due to us as having been among the earliest of the reformers.

Of the general history of the hat, we shall say nothing; the curious reader will find plenty about it in the authors who treat of costume. Neither shall we attempt to string together the many instructive anecdotes which are extant about the hat; such, for instance, as that which tells us how a certain czar of Muscovy once held an audience for the reception of the ambassadors accredited to his barbarous court; how he of the then haughty Venice made his appearance with his hat on, nor thought fit to uncover on arriving in the presence; how the savage on the throne thereupon ordered the hat to be nailed to his head; and how, the order being instantly obeyed—nails and hammer having probably been kept at hand by anticipation—the English ambassador immediately clapped on his hat too, and wore it for a time, but without the nailing being in his case resorted to. Nevertheless, although thus abstaining, generally, from historical references, there are two short stories relating to the hat in France which may be repeated here, as shewing how significant a hat-question has been at times.

'A peasant of Auvergne, speaking to a nobleman, did not remove his hat. The nobleman knocked it off. "If you do not pick it up again," exclaimed the peasant, "the king is coming here soon, and he will cut your head off!" The nobleman was afraid, and picked up the peasant's hat.'

Here we see, symbolised, the people—the *plebs*, for there was then no *populus*—relying on the royal power for redress against the aristocracy. But coming down to the convocation of the Etats-généraux in 1789, we find things changed a good deal.

'At the sitting of the 5th May, the king having covered himself, and, after him, the *noblesse* having covered themselves, the *Tiers* were about to do the same; but the king, to hinder them from thus assuming equality with the *noblesse*, immediately uncovered himself again.'

Here we see the *plebs* in process of transformation into the *populus;* and royalty, unfortunately for itself, siding with the aristocracy against it. The hats referred to in these anecdotes were, of course, not such as our round hats of the present day. But has not the round hat, wretched thing that it is, its significance also? Certainly it has; as we have already hinted, it symbolises our conventionality. But enough of such high philosophy; let us come to the more tangible grievances we protest against. These grievances are of two kinds: the hats inflicted on us are first, we say, uncomfortable; and secondly, they are unbecoming.

It is winter, and you have been out for a couple of hours. How do your ears feel? You endeavoured, on starting, to make up for the deficiencies of the despicable hat by putting on a supplementary neckcloth or shawl, or an upper garment with a high collar; and with how much success? Did you not keep twitching up collar or shawl at every other step, as the arrowy sleet stung you? Were you not more than once obliged fairly to turn your back on the blast; and each time, as you attempted to effect a water-tight alliance between them, did not the high collar, and the hat-brim, so far from uniting to protect you, come into angry collision with each other, and leave, now here and now there, a gap never neglected by the vigilant enemy? We ask you once again, how do your ears feel? Then, whenever you resumed your way, were you not obliged—first, because the vicious hat afforded no protection to your face, and secondly, lest it might go off altogether with the wind—to bend forward at such an angle that you could not see your way, and so kept poking at the visages of unoffending fellow-creatures; not to say that once you came into actual contact with a lamp-post, and were conscious that a grim being was looking fixedly at you, doubtful whether you were not drunk and incapable? You had not your umbrella, of course, for no umbrella could have lived in such a gale; but even had it been otherwise, what do you think of the absurdity of being compelled, simply because your hat is what it is, and not what it should be, to carry such defensive armour at all? At last, when, bewildered and exhausted, you took refuge in an omnibus, did you not hit up against the roof of it with your sublime crown, and so bring the direful hat down about your ears? Perhaps at the moment, half-frozen as your head was, you felt but little hurt, and thought only of the probable damage done to your hat, wicked author of all the mischief though it was; but as those ears thaw, they will grow nice and hot, and then you will be able, in no small degree, to appreciate a punishment well known in former days, and executed often for much less folly than that you are yourself guilty of in wearing such a thing as the modern hat.

Of spring, we need not speak: in this country, now-a-days, only in fancy doth ethereal mildness come; though assuredly, if it did, that too would bring us grief, because of our hats. We pass on, therefore, to summer. How hot it is, how dreadfully hot, and what a glare from the noontide sun! The wearer of a hat is passing along a treeless road. His eyes are starting from his head, for his head is jammed into an oven. He pulls the hat over his brow, lifting it up behind: it gives him the aspect of a bull about to charge. He perches it now on one side of his head, now on the other, and he reminds you of a magpie. He throws it back again, exposing his whole countenance, and he looks like an ass. At last he can bear it no longer, so, submitting rather to the direct rays of the sun than to the baking process, he takes off his hat, and carries it in his hand, or over his shoulder on his cane. Seeing which, it occurs to one forcibly that he might as well be without such a hat altogether.

Or again, it is autumn, about the equinox. The strong but playful breeze coming suddenly round a corner, tips off your modern hat, and away it goes merrily along the street, in the opposite direction from that in which you were taking it. It goes, and you go; and so, between you, you have the satisfaction of affording much innocent amusement to the lower orders. It goes, and you go; and if its career is not terminated by hoof or wheel, and it is not taken possession of by a truculent-looking bull-dog, whose master, after directing his attention to it, and telling him to 'hold,' has disappeared for a little, why, you pick it up, and put it on again, with the prospect of having to repeat the performance in a few minutes, unless with painful care your hand keeps it to your head; for you know well that if you leave it but for an instant to itself, the sportive thing will be off again and away.

There are other discomforts of the hat to which we might allude; and also not a few inconveniences, such, for instance, as those it involves to the traveller; but it will be enough to indicate them in an indirect way, by stating what, in our opinion, are some of the qualities which the headgear that we so much desiderate should possess. This we shall do very briefly; but let the enterprising hatter who is to inaugurate a new era take heed to these few hints. Though not of gold in themselves, they may, by the alchemy of his practical experience, become words of gold to him. If they do, let him remember us, and shew his gratitude by presenting us cheerfully with as many copies of his improved model as we may require.

First, then, we say, the coming hat ought to be so contrived, that without being tight, it will stick to its place so naturally as not easily to be displaced by every slight accident. Secondly, while it should be impervious to water, it should allow of the air passing through it freely. These two conditions, we may note in passing, are well answered by a modern helmet, first introduced into the Prussian service, in which, at the top, there is a chimney, or ventilator, admitting or excluding the air at pleasure, and according as it is screwed round in one direction or the other. But a helmet would scarcely answer some of the other conditions we have to propose. For, thirdly, we say that the new hat ought to be light; and fourthly, that it ought not to be, like the present one, a stiff, unyielding thing, of a shape impossible to be altered, however much circumstances may call for an alteration. Fifthly, it ought to afford a shade to the eyes against the sun; and sixthly, it ought, in a certain measure, to protect the neck from rain. Seventhly, it ought not to be easily injured either as to the material or the form of it. And lastly, the look of it, as connected both with the face and the figure, ought to be sufficiently pleasing to the eye.

Perhaps the nearest approach to the thing we long for is found in the true broad and round Scottish bonnet; and our ingenious hatter will do well to keep that in mind when he sets about his task of improvement. It is elastic, it is light; you may roll it up without harming it; it sticks on well when it is wanted to stick; and as it may be pulled about, and depressed or elevated on any side, it may be so trimmed according to the wind and the sun as to offer very good shade or shelter in any direction. Then, the upper part might be made of a waterproof material, and the under, of one through which the required ventilation might be procured. And, finally, as to the look of the thing, you are not to suppose that the comparatively narrow bonnet worn by the peasantry, and usually drawn down by them all round, till it resembles the top of a hay-stack, is the shape which it necessarily assumes; no, if you would form an idea of its capability to assume a graceful shape, you must see it on the head of some one who not merely wears it, but knows how to wear it. In such a case, turned up gallantly on one side, and perhaps with one, two, or three eagle-plumes attached to it with a clasp of cairngorm, it becomes as handsome a thing to put on a man's head as any we know; it is picturesque without being theatrical. These be our hints to hatters.

As to the present hat being unbecoming, probably it is not necessary to say much. Not many, except the hatters, would defend it on the score of its intrinsic beauty. Some, indeed, might speak in its favour, from an association of ideas, it being commonly considered a 'gentlemanly' thing; and how far this feeling is carried among our Irish friends, we need scarcely say. Your true Irishman will rather assert his dignity by wearing a hat with scarce a crown to it, and no brim at all, than condescend to put on a respectable cap. But, on the whole, few, when put to it, would maintain that the hat is becoming. How many of us would have their portrait painted with their hat on? No one, we should think, would horrify a sculptor by proposing to him that he should give a hat to a statue. Apollo would not look well in a hat. Neither do you look well in one. But then, as you say, it is a gentlemanly thing, and that is much; nay, it is a great deal indeed, to all those whom no one would mistake for gentlemen, were it not for the hat question. The sable King George of the Bonny River is of the same opinion; clothed in an old hat, and very little more, he comes on board to ask the honour of having your linen to wash, and flatters himself that, because of the magic hat, he cannot fail to make a favourable impression. And what, again, say you to Old Clo, with three hats on his head? Is he three times as much a gentleman as yourself, or is that carrying the joke too far?

It will doubtless have been understood that all along it has been only of the detestable round hat of these days that we have been writing. Not to speak of still more ancient coverings, we avow that we have some favour for the old cocked-hat, though not for the three-cornered one—that is to say, the fore-and-aft kind—which, though it has some recommendations, is very ugly. There was some sense in the cocked-hat; the sides, being in their intention, flaps which might be let down according to the weather. Altogether, if nothing original can now be found, it might be well if we returned to that old fashion; to knock the round hat into a cocked-hat would, at all events, be a step in the right direction. But we hope for something still better. As to straw-hats, they are not bad things in summer, except that they are prone to fly away; but they are not at all calculated for winter, and we have much more winter than summer in this country. As to wide-awakes, Jim Crows, and the like, we will have none of them; their very names shew them to be what we may term slang hats. Caps are good; the sailor-cap of blue cloth being much the best. On an old gentleman, however, it has rather too gay a look; and though we have no objections to gay old gentlemen—being, in fact, rather inclined that way ourselves—yet most old gentlemen are not gay, and we must avoid making them ridiculous. Besides, our prejudice in favour of this cap—for, on consideration, we must confess it to be a prejudice—arises very much from associations connected with it; for the sailor-cap, like the open throat and loose handkerchief, is but a fair-weather thing after all. The same, and in even a greater degree, may be said of what is called the Glengarry bonnet; it is becoming enough, but as to protection, it affords no more than a night-cap would.

But we are compelled here and thus to stop, more abruptly than we intended, for we had designed to thunder out such a fulmination on the modern hat as would have abolished it at once. But no matter, it cannot now be thundered; the fact being, that with a view to do the philippic well, and with that vigour which an immediate sense of personal injury alone can give, we put on our hat, and walked forth in this sultry day of August. We have overdone the thing; our eyes goggle, our temples throb, our brain is in a state of semi-congestion; we can no more. And the worst of it is, that we are not sure where we bought that hat, and the ticket with the maker's name on it has disappeared from the lining, so that we do not know on whom to take vengeance.

Only one word more, then. We have abolished hairpowder and pig-tails for the head, things that were merely absurd; why should we retain the present hat, a thing which is not only absurd but hurtful? Very hurtful, surely, that must be which even in the smallest degree affects for evil, not a minor organ or a limb, but 'the dome of thought, the palace of the soul' itself.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE noticeable topics of the past month are numerous: masters and men in sundry places have left off trading and working, to talk about a strike; and while both sides are incurring loss, dispassionate onlookers can only lament that knowledge of commercial and social economy, and of human obligation, should even yet be so very imperfect and rudimentary. Perhaps another generation will pass away before masters recognise as a fact that their duty does not end with the payment of wages; and the workmen, that any artisan or artificer has a perfect right to make his own work-bargain, and to work overtime if he likes, and for ninepence a day, or for nothing, should it please him to do so. If working-men would spend less money in the public-house, and put more in the savings-bank, they would never need to join a union or to strike.

Before these lines appear in print, the grandest problem of steam-navigation will, there is little reason to doubt, be accomplished by the trial-trip and first voyage of the *Great Eastern*. Another question, that of profit, at all events, remains to be solved. Some of our military chiefs think it would be a good thing for government to have four such ships as the *Great Eastern* for the public service. For instance, in sending out the garrison reliefs, usually from 8000 to 9000 men, all might go at once in the large ship: the officers of different corps would have the opportunity of becoming acquainted with one another, and with the different stations, which, under present circumstances, of each relief sailing direct to its destination in a separate vessel, is not possible. A great ship would drop the several companies at their destinations, receive on board those which were to come home, and thus perform a voyage round the world. There might be economy in such an arrangement.

The news that our copper coinage is to be withdrawn, and replaced by a neat and convenient coinage in bronze, gives general satisfaction. The change is to be made with as little delay as possible; and it is easy to foresee that the new coins will be convenient for the pocket, as forty-five of the new pennies will not contain more copper than twenty-six of the old ones. The weight of the copper at present in circulation is 3500 tons, and we are informed that the profit on calling in and recoining that large quantity would amount to L.92,000.

A twelvemonth ago, we drew attention to the Swedish calculating-machine, as invented by Mr Scheutz, which was exhibited for a while at the rooms of the Royal Society, and afterwards purchased for the Dudley Observatory, at Albany, state of New York. We have now to mention that a machine on the same principle, constructed by Messrs Donkin, has been purchased for the public service in the office of the Registrar-general, where it will be employed in calculating the numerical tables published by that important functionary.

The Horticultural Society, which has been for some time in a lifeless state, is now starting on a new term of existence, with what appear to be uncommonly bright prospects. They are to have the use of a portion of the land at Kensington for a garden, with proper appliances; and we may hope for a renewal of the operations and experiments in horticulture which proved so interesting in former years, as well as of the exhibitions which attracted so many thousand lovers of flowers to Chiswick. The concessions on the part of government are viewed with so much satisfaction, that already the Society have received L.28,000 in subscriptions towards carrying out their objects. A novel feature in the gardens will be, as we hear, a range of arcades, which are to serve the purpose of a national gallery of sculpture.

The commissioners appointed to inquire into the law of patents recommend a continuance of the present scale of fees, for the reason, that of the 3000 applications now made yearly for provisional protection, more than half are allowed to drop, and that a large number are sought solely with a view to notoriety. Were the fees reduced in amount, the advertising speculators would flood the office with their applications. The surplus this year over expenses will be L.30,000, and in future years L.20,000; and the commissioners are of opinion that the accumulated fund, which is very large, should be expended in the erection of a suitable building for a patent-office, to contain a library, and all the essentials which experience has shewn to be desirable.

The Proceedings of the Royal Dublin Society contain particulars of experiments made by the late Professor Davy, which, in relation to the much-talked of poisoning case, have a special significance. Sulphuric acid is largely manufactured from iron pyrites, which costs about twenty-five shillings a ton, five or six times less than sulphur. This sulphuric acid is used by the manufacturers of 'superphosphate' and artificial manures. Pyrites, however, contains a considerable quantity of arsenic, which passes into the sulphuric and the manure, and is in turn, as Professor Davy demonstrates, taken up by the plants in fields to which that manure has been applied. Sheep have been known to dislike turnips grown with superphosphate, and to half starve themselves in consequence, when they would eat freely of those grown with ordinary farm-yard manure. The final conclusion from these experiments is, that arsenic may find its way into the body without having been directly administered.

The Royal National Life-boat Institution deserve a passing notice, as much for the active benevolence displayed by the members, as for the improvements they have effected in what may be called the art of saving life. They now number eighty-one completely equipped life-boat stations on the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, where the boats are available at any moment for the rescue of life and property. They were the means of saving 110 persons in 1858, besides affording relief in twenty-nine instances to vessels in distress. The whole number of lives saved by the Institution since its first establishment is 10,902. While, as shewn by the returns of the Board of Trade, the number of wrecks around our coasts is more than 1100 a year, the Institution will have occasion enough for exertion, and merit sympathy. Such a society ought not to be in debt, and we can only trust that its subscribers will multiply until they can carry on their benevolent operations without pecuniary embarrassment.

Further progress has been made in the reclamation of land from the sea on our eastern coast, by an embankment constructed at the Earl of Leicester's cost, at the little port of Wells, in Norfolk. Within two years, the barrier and a breakwater have been built, and the water shut out from seven hundred acres, which ere long will be green with pastures or yellow with grain. It might be worth while to try whether the newly-won lands would not suit for plantations of the Sea Treemallow (*Lavatera arborea*), which by recent experiments is demonstrated to be an excellent material for paper-making. The *Lavatera*, which is well known as a handsome ornament for shrubberies and borders, is a biennial, but will bear cutting the first year. It grows wild on some parts of the coast of England and Scotland, regardless, apparently, of wind and weather, and thriving best in a marine atmosphere. Specimens of what the plant will produce have been laid before the Royal Dublin Society by Mr Robert Plunkett in the shape of cord, rope, thread, lace, paper, and cardboard—all of good quality. The mode of preparation resembles that by which hemp and flax are made ready for the market; and it is stated that the yield of one acre of land is, one ton of fibre, and one of fibrous wood.

A Report, published by authority, On the Colonisation and Settlement of India, gives a good summary of what is known concerning the climate and capabilities of our Eastern empire. Not a few of the points therein contained have been occasionally noticed in this *Journal* within the past ten years; and now that they are put forth in their present form, they will doubtless attract attention. The evidence shews that wherever Europeans settle, an improvement in the neighbourhood is sure to follow. By going to a height of 4000 feet on the mountains, it is possible to live in a European climate: on the other hand, we are told that the statements concerning the effects of the climate even in the hot regions have been much exaggerated. The Bengal planters are described as 'healthy and hardy' as bluff English farmers. The colonists most in request at present are mechanics and practical agriculturists; and an assurance is given that the great staples, coffee, tea, wheat, and cotton, may be grown in any quantity. It depends on ourselves to cultivate and develop the great trade with Central Asia, or to leave it to be done by the Russians.

Since the great Mutiny, the long-neglected Andamans have been revisited, and are now used as a penal settlement to which the mutinous sepoys are banished. The Home department of the government of India have published a report, with a map and pictorial illustrations, of these islands, from which we learn, that notwithstanding a considerable mortality, the settlement is now established, and as the convicts are kept steadily employed in clearing away the jungle, will become more and more healthy, perhaps better than Singapore. The soil is fertile, and water plentiful. One of the convicts who escaped and fraternised with the natives, was glad after a while to return to the settlement; others had contrived to get across to the coast of Burmah on rafts; some were drowned in the attempt, some committed suicide by drowning; but as it was intended to bring the wives and families of the best behaved convicts to the islands, there would, it was thought, be less discontent among them. Fifty miles east of Great Andaman, a huge rock, nearly a thousand feet high, known as Barren Island, rises from the sea. It is an active volcano, and the surveyors who visited it shew that some of the eruptive phenomena which it exhibits help to explain the phenomena which have puzzled Sir Charles Lyell in his observations on volcanoes. The activity may be judged of from the fact that, when the seamen jumped from the boat on nearing the shore, they sprang suddenly back, for the water was scalding hot.

Our Australian colonies continue to give a good account of themselves. Victoria has planted a million vines, and made last year 3000 gallons of wine, besides selling 32,000 hundredweights of grapes; she has 32 acres of sorgo under cultivation, and 300,000 acres of wheat. To raise wheat in proportion to the number of inhabitants, there should be 750,000 acres; but the deficient supply is made up from South Australia, where, with a population of 110,000, there are nearly 188,000 acres under wheat. While recognising these proofs of prosperity, we must not forget that, as Mr Cobden says, there is plenty to eat on our side of the world, as evidenced by the number of emigrants from the United Kingdom having been but 113,972 in 1858, while in 1857 it was 212,875.

There is an instance of involuntary ornithological emigration to record in the shipment of 300 sparrows for New Zealand, where they are to be let loose to increase and multiply, and to devour the grubs and caterpillars which at present infest the colony and destroy the crops. If the sparrows retain their English pertness and hardihood to the end of the voyage, they will easily naturalise themselves in a country where the English pheasant has already been successfully introduced.

We have now before us the first instalment of a valuable scientific work, newly issued by Messrs Bradbury and Evans, and which it is intended that three others like itself shall follow—*Nature-printed British Sea-weeds.* To the botanist desirous of prosecuting the study of the algæ, this work is of great importance; but it is not less calculated to delight the lover of the beautiful, however destitute of science: nor can we deem it one of the least of its merits, that it presents science in an aspect exceedingly attractive, and is thus calculated to induce youthful minds to enter upon pursuits in every way most profitable and delightful. The varied forms of animal and vegetable life which force themselves on our attention on the sea-shore, afford a theme of contemplation which can never be exhausted, but which is found always more and more productive of pure and elevating enjoyment. The plates of the volume before us exhibit some of these. They contain most exquisite representations, both in form and colour, of many of the plants whose bright soft hues and multitude of marvellously delicate branchlets we have so often admired in our summer wanderings, when we saw the shrimps gliding among them in the clear rock-pools, and the tentacula of the sea-anemones vying with them in beauty of colour, or gazed far down into the green waters at the furthest extremity of the ledge, where their rosy tints were revealed by the strong sunshine, and the sea-urchin climbed beside them on the perpendicular rock. On opening this volume, one is indeed apt to imagine that the actual plants are there; and it is only on a more careful inspection that we become satisfied that it is not really so, but that they are merely represented by a wonderful process of art. The volume is like a portion of a museum devoted to the illustration of a particular branch of natural history. The process by which the pictures are made is such as to insure their perfect accuracy. The truth of nature cannot have been misrepresented through the mistake of an artist, and the actual reality is before us, just as if we looked upon the original specimen itself. It is not easy to overestimate the advantage likely to result to science from this multiplication of specimens, as it may be termed, from the opportunity thus given to the young botanist to compare species, and, to a certain extent, to examine specimens even of the rarest ones for himself, and in his own abode.

Mr Henry Bradbury introduced the process of nature-printing from Vienna, and has nearly perfected the art in this country. His *Nature-printed Ferns* was the first work he attempted, and, we believe, it has met with a reception commensurate with its high merits. The present volume on Sea-weeds, though apparently so elaborate in construction, and printed so beautifully, was produced in the surprisingly short time of five weeks! When the entire series of nature-printed subjects is finished, the public will have a set of books unexampled for the beauty and verisimilitude of their contents.

SUSPIRIA.

There is a love in my young breast,
 A love that works me woe;
For he loves me not, whom I love best,
 So my love I dare not shew.
Ah me! how sweetly shall I rest,
 When my love has laid me low!

There is one hope lives in my heart,
 A hope to meet again—
To meet thee, never more to part,
 Beyond all mortal pain.
Oh! wilt thou love me, when thou art
 A spirit free from stain?

There 's a prayer I pray in the chapel lone,
 It is a prayer for thee!
There 's a tear I drop on the marble stone,
 That no living eye must see.
Ah me! when I lie in my grave unknown,
 Who 'll drop one tear for me?

Eta Iota.

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MAIDS AND MISTRESSES.

'I REALLY have no patience with that tiresome Susan, Charles. She gets more careless every day. Indeed, if this sort of conduct continues, it will be quite impossible for us to keep her. Soon we shall not have an uncracked or unchipped piece of glass or china in the house.'

'Well, well, my love,' said I, with a sigh, and preparing for one of my dearest Kate's jeremiads about the manifold sins and wickednesses of domestics in general, and those of her own servants in particular—'well, well, don't let us put ourselves out about it, at any rate. Let us take it coolly, whatever it is.'

'Take it coolly, indeed! And so I might, if this sort of thing only happened now and then; but not when it happens almost every day. Such a servant would be expensive, if she served you for nothing.'

'What is broken now, Kate? Your best tea-and-coffee set, I suppose. A regular smash—eh!'

'It is not kind of you to laugh at me, Charles, because I am vexed at the loss of things which we can ill afford to replace. Susan threw down the lunch-tray this morning, and broke everything on it to atoms. Such carelessness is unpardonable—it is really too bad.'

'It is very annoying, Kate, certainly; but grumbling won't put humpty-dumpty together again, and perhaps it was purely an accident, after all. As the proverb says, what can't be cured, must be endured; and accidents, you know, will happen in the best regulated families.'

'Why, Charles, you are as full of vulgar proverbs as Sancho Panza himself; but in spite of them, I shall persist in calling things by their right names; and certainly the breakage this morning was no accident, but arose from pure carelessness. Accidents would not happen every day, and scarcely a day passes without Susan breaking something. Last week, when those disagreeable friends of yours dined here, she let fall the top of one of the vegetable dishes, and so spoiled my best dinner-set.'

'Perhaps that was accidental too, Kate,' said I, anxiously endeavouring to allay the storm. 'But, pray, don't make a fuss about it. I would put up with almost anything rather than be always changing servants. When one sees so many new faces in the house, one never feels at home. I don't see, though, why you call Brown and Smith disagreeable fellows. They are both intelligent men, and have seen a good deal of the world. Brown is the inventor of the apparatus for consolidating and deodorising the sewage of the metropolis, and'——

'Never mind what he invented, Charles; something nasty, I dare say; and although he may have seen a great deal of what you gentlemen call the world, he has certainly seen very little good society. I wish, with all my heart, that he would invent some kind of apparatus that would supersede domestic servants, for they are the misery of one's life.'

'Something of the nature of a dumb waiter or waitress, Kate; warranted not to smash the crockery, and not to give pert answers to impatient and unreasonable mistresses. If my friend Brown could do that, he would soon be the favourite of the ladies, plain as he is.'

'Unreasonable!' cried Kate, with some little warmth. 'Do I smash china and glass every day of my life? And if I don't, Charles, pray, why should Susan?'

'That's just it, my love. You don't handle the china and other breakable articles of domestic use as Susan does, so you don't break them; and as you do not seem to make any allowance for Susan on this account, I call you somewhat unreasonable. How often, Kate, in the course of the year, do you set the lunch out? Your poor parlour-maid has 365 chances *per annum* of throwing down your crockery-ware, whilst you have no chance at all. Surely, then, to institute a comparison between yourself and Susan, in this matter, and to condemn her for breaking so much more than you do, is most unjust. You would be the first to call such a proceeding *unreasonable*, in any case in which you had no concern; and if you object to the application of the term to mistresses who act in this way, it is because we are all apt to be blind to our own failings.'

'If a mistress is never to reprove a servant for doing her work ill, because she never does such work herself, servants ought never to be reproved at all; and that is ridiculous, Charles.'

'Not so fast, Kate—not so fast. I don't mean that you ought not to reprove your servants, when they do ill—that, as you say, would be ridiculous; but I do mean that you should not measure a servant's culpability by an unfair test or standard, as you did just now. Even in so trivial a matter, as it seems to you, of chiding a domestic for breaking a water-jug, you should carefully weigh the circumstances of the case, and let the judgment control the temper. You violated this rule just now when you instituted the comparison between yourself and Susan, and founded on it a very exaggerated opinion of her culpability. We ought'——

'Ha, ha, ha! why, a Daniel is come to judgment, I declare. Charles, dear, you really ought to have been christened Solomon. Ha, ha, ha!'

'You may laugh, Kate,' said I, a little nettled, 'as much as you please, but you may depend upon it that there are faults on both sides; and from whom are we to expect the greatest forbearance—from the educated mistress or from the uneducated maid? Go where you will, you hear nothing but complaints of the servants in these latter days; as if that particular class of persons had very much degenerated in moral qualities, while their betters have improved, or, at any rate, not sunk beneath the virtues of their ancestors. All experience, however, of mankind and of womankind too, tells us that when two parties are always quarrelling, the fault lies six on one side and half a dozen on the other; and with regard to the difficulties people have with their servants, is it not plain that reformation is most to be looked for first on the side of the employer rather than on that of the servant? The mistress hardly ever makes due allowance for the difficulties of the maid's position. She forgets the number of occasions on which objectionable points in a servant's character may be shewn, and most unjustly condemns her because she is not as those individuals whose temper and other qualities she has no such means of testing. In short, they appear to me to expect a great deal too much from a class of persons who have many things to try them, and who have generally had very little educational training to prepare them for the difficult part in life they have to play.'

'But surely, Charles,' said Kate, with true woman's pertinacity sticking to the individual case in which she was personally interested at the moment—'surely you wouldn't ask me to hold my tongue till every breakable article in the house has got a family mark on it? I suppose that I may be permitted to shew that I am vexed at such losses? or do you consider that even that is unbecoming an *educated* mistress?'

'Certainly, Kate, you will be quite justified in speaking to Susan on the subject, if you have not already done so. But do it without anger, that is all. Blame her as you would blame an equal to whom you had a right to speak; and don't be tempted by the relationship in which you stand to one another, to visit her with an amount of reproach far beyond what the occasion calls for. Try and remember the fact, that an act of this sort is no greater fault in a parlour-maid than it would be in a princess; and think how you would feel yourself if every careless and thoughtless act you committed would bring down on you a torrent of invective. If you do, you will be much more likely to apportion your reproaches accurately.'

'I am not accustomed, Charles,' said Kate with some dignity, 'to pour what you call a "torrent of invective" on my domestics. However, I shall certainly request Miss Susan to be more careful in future; but I have no doubt whatever that she will seize the opportunity of giving me warning; and if I cared to keep her, I should hold my tongue.'

'I beg your pardon, my dear, for having made use of a rather strong expression, which, of course, I did not mean should be taken literally: but tell me why you think Susan will give you warning, if you speak to her about the smash of this morning. She appears to me to be a very civil young woman, and the very opposite of what ladies call pert.'

'O yes, she is very civil. I have no fault whatever to find with her temper. In that respect, and indeed in all others, except that of carelessness, she suits me very well; but, like the rest of her class, she wants, as they say, to better herself. I know that her friends want her to take a place where a footman is kept, and a very little will turn the scale against her remaining with me.'

'Well, Kate, and why should not Susan better herself if she can? Wouldn't you better yourself, if you could find the opportunity?'

'O dear me, Charles, don't fancy that I wish Susan to stay; she may go to-morrow, if she likes, the careless thing. I only wish you to observe how ungrateful your protégées are. Do what you will, they leave you directly they can get more pay, and raise themselves into what I presume they believe to be a higher position in the social scale.'

'Now, my dear, I must be permitted to say that you are again very unreasonable in your strictures on this class of people. Why do you apply to them a standard of moral perfection which you would never dream of setting up for our own measurement? I shouldn't take half-guinea fees, should I, if I could get guineas? Why, then, blame Susan for desiring to get L.18 per annum instead of L.12?'

'My wages, Charles, are as good as L.16 a year, counting tea, sugar, and washing; but if Susan and her class remembered their catechisms, they would feel that it was their duty to be content in that'——

'Nonsense, Kate, the catechism was not written only for those who serve, was it? Was it not intended for the instruction of masters and mistresses as well as of servants? If we masters and mistresses put so very liberal an interpretation on our duty towards our neighbour, let us, in common fairness, be equally liberal in its application to those below us. If your husband or brothers did not strive to better themselves, you would be the first—for you are ambitious, Kate, if only to cut out that vulgar Mrs Muggridge you dislike so—to think them poor-spirited fellows. It is but the other day that you were castle-building at a fine rate, and planning all sorts of improvements for the time when I shall make a clear thousand a year; and yet so inconsistent are you, that the moment a person in your service desires to better herself in the same way, you speak of such ambition as if you thought it a grave moral offence. The truth is, my love, that this is another instance of the unreasonable habit you have of'——

'Dear me, Charles, how you do harp on that one string. I am quite sick of hearing you.'

'I harp on it—as you call it, Kate—because it is the cause of a large proportion of the dissatisfaction we feel with our domestic servants. People who are rigidly just and discriminating in their judgments on the actions of those of their own class, are often most unjust, prejudiced, and partial, when estimating the character and actions of those below them; and so, what is called a laudable desire to get on in a man of my profession, becomes changeableness, discontent, and even ingratitude, in poor Susan.'

'I'm sure, Charles, I am not such an unjust wretch as you make me out to be. Mistresses have a good deal to put up with, say what you will, and one must be an angel never to complain.'

'I am far from denying, my dear, that you have something to put up with. What I complain of is, that you don't put up with it as quietly as you ought, even if only for your own comfort; you would do so if you kept in mind the fact, that the other parties concerned have something to put up with too.'

'Do you mean to say that I am bad-tempered, Charles? Upon my word, you are very polite.'

'Not at all, Kate—not at all; a little hasty, nothing more, and not always guided by reason. If one of my sex did not take on himself to tell your sex the truth in this matter, what chance would you ever have of hearing it? When ladies get together, they do nothing but encourage one another in the error which I reprobate. Your servants will certainly owe me some gratitude, if I can convince you that you are too exacting, and induce you to bear and forbear accordingly; and you will soon find that I have rendered you no inconsiderable service.'

'I don't know what you mean by expecting too much, Charles; I only want what everybody wants—a thoroughly good servant.'

'Then everybody is a fool, my love—that is, if they expect to get it. Servants, on their side, may excuse their discontent by saying that they only want thoroughly good mistresses; and if you admit the disappointment you meet with as an excuse for yourself, you must admit a like plea in excuse for them. Each wants what she considers perfection of character in the other, and truly, both the perfect maid and the perfect mistress—particularly if each one were made the judge of the other's perfections—would be very singular specimens of humanity. For my part, however, I have no desire to see our servants become the moral monsters which alone would make them "thoroughly good" in the eyes of their mistresses.'

'If you mean me, Charles, and I suppose you do'—here my dear Kitty looked rather inclined to cry—'I think it very unkind of you to make such cutting remarks. I am sure I don't want a moral monster, as you call it, or anything of the sort. I only want what everybody wants—that's all. I only want a steady, clean, industrious, civil, and obliging domestic. There is no harm in that, is there?'

'That is all, indeed! and enough too, I should think. If you were as exacting, my dear, with respect to your friends and acquaintances, you would be changing them as often as you do your servants. Few of them would come up to your standard of character, for the terms expressive of the qualities which you insist on having in a servant, are interpreted so rigidly by you, that they include much more than they do in the ordinary acceptation of them; nay, they even are made to embrace moral qualities quite incompatible with each other—qualities which can never be found existing in the same individual. I am quite justified, then, in asserting that a perfect servant—you being the judge—would be nothing less than a moral monster.'

'You yourself, Charles, must wish to have servants steady, civil, and industrious; and as to what you say about incompatible qualities, you are getting so profound that I really don't understand you. You can't make me believe that black is white. When I say steady, for instance, I mean steady, neither more nor less. Pray, now, what do you think I mean? Something very cruel and shocking, I suppose? When I write for a girl's character, what do I say? What do other ladies say? Is she steady, sober, cleanly, industrious, civil, honest, obliging, and all that sort of thing'——

'But, Kate'——

'Don't interrupt me, Charles. It is my turn to speak now, and I ask you: Would you like an unsteady servant, a drunken servant, a dirty servant, an idle servant, an uncivil servant, a dishonest servant, a disobliging servant? and if you would not, Charles, as I presume, why blame me for trying to get you what you do like?'

'You mistake me, Kate, altogether. I don't blame you for trying to get servants endowed with as many of these good qualities as one may reasonably expect to find in a fallible being like ourselves; but I do blame you for being angry because you can't find them altogether and in an extraordinary degree of perfection. Now, tell me—there's a good girl—what you mean to include under the term "steady," when you apply the term to a servant.'

'Why, Charles, I mean, as you know perfectly well—only you wish to annoy me by pretending ignorance—that she is not to be fond of gadding about to see her friends—that she is not to gossip with other people's servants—and that she should everywhere, and with everybody, maintain a quiet and respectable demeanour; above all, too, for *that* I never will permit, she must not have a parcel of people coming to see her.'

'Ah, I see! no follower allowed.'

'Followers, indeed! I should think not. I have the area-gate locked every night as soon as it is dusk. You would think me very much to blame, Charles, if I did not.'

'The adjective "steady," then, Kate,' I continued, without noticing the telling reference to the area-gate—'the adjective "steady," in your vocabulary, when it is used to qualify the compound substantive maid-servant, means not only that the moral conduct shall be above suspicion—for there I entirely agree with you—but that the young woman shall be devoid of all natural affection for her parents and other relatives, and that she shall vow herself to celibacy, like a nun. She is to stifle, if she ever feels them, the promptings of filial love; to forget father, mother, brother, and sister, for your sake; to be incapable of friendship, and proof against forming a virtuous attachment to a person of the opposite sex. The indulgence of the best feelings of our common nature will inevitably lay her open, in the eyes of those who employ her, to the charge of gadding about, of gossiping, and—*horribile dictu!*—of having followers; in short, of being more or less "unsteady." You desire, however, that your servants should manifest less callousness of heart as regards you and your interests. Although deaf to the calls of natural affection, they are to shew attachment to you; and although indifferent to the claims of friendship, they are cheerfully and zealously to recognise yours. Surely, Kate, you will see, on reflection, that the task which falls to the lot of the poor servant-girl, if she would please a mistress who has no regard to the difficulties of her position, is a very hard one. It is, in truth, one which demands an amount of self-denial and self-discipline rarely to be met with even in those who have enjoyed every advantage from careful moral and intellectual training; and which, therefore, must be still more rarely found in the class to which domestic servants belong. When you are put to some inconvenience by this "unsteadiness," as it is called, if you would but reflect for a moment how natural it is, and how shamefully egotistical it is of us to require that the whole being of another should centre in us—that she should have no thought, feeling, or wish but concerns *us*—I think you would restrain the words of impatience and reproof which you sometimes so heedlessly utter.'

'But I require my servants, Charles, to be civil as well as steady. Have you nothing to say, dear, about my unreasonableness in expecting that I should always be spoken to and served with proper respect? I said *civil*, you know.' And my wife laid great stress on the word civil, at the same time assuming an air of resignation and patient suffering which has been, before now, exceedingly efficacious in matrimonial disturbances. But I have always felt strongly on this subject, and had warmed to my work; so I proceeded, unmindful of the consequences.

'You did say *civil*, my dear; and I certainly have something to say about that too. Indeed, I think you more exacting and unreasonable on this point than you are with regard to the quality which you name "steadiness." The consequences, too, of your exactions on this score are the more important, because occasions must arise every day which put the temper of both maid and mistress to the proof.'

'I think it very natural that one should desire to be spoken civilly to, at all events—particularly in one's own house.'

'Very natural, my love; but when we consider what a wide meaning *civility* has, when applied to a domestic, we ought not to wonder that we don't always meet with it. In a servant, *civility* means a superhuman meekness and evenness of temper which neither bile nor corns nor contrarieties, nor discomforts of any kind, either mental or physical, can overthrow. It means that he or she is to be civil though the master or mistress is *un*civil; and, in short, that every impatient look, word, and gesture is to be counted as a want of it, under no matter what degree of provocation. Which of us, under like conditions, could hope to maintain a character for civility?'

'You certainly would not, Charles.'

'Thank you, my dear. The remark proves the point for which I am contending, that it is a hard matter to be civil, as a servant must be, to those who do or say something we don't like. To sum up my argument, you—and when I say you, I don't mean you, Kitty, in particular, but the majority of mistresses—are discontented and unjust to your servants, because you judge them by an unfair standard, and because you seek for a degree of perfection in them which you would never expect to find in women of your own class.'

'I had no idea, Charles,' said my wife, with a slight toss of the head and drawing down the corners of her mouth—'I had no idea I was so wicked a creature.'

'Not wicked,' said I, smiling at my dear Kate's offended air—'not wicked, but heedless; and even that not by your own fault, but because such heedlessness is all but universal in the society of which you form a part, and whose failings, therefore, you must in a great degree share.'

'Well, Charles,' said Kate, a little mollified, 'it is something to find that you don't think worse of me than of other women. That, however, appears to be bad enough; and for my part, I wonder how you ever came to unite yourself for ever to one of my sex, since you have so poor an opinion of it.'

'Now, Kitty, don't be angry; and don't make me say what I did *not* say. You know very well that I am far from having an unfavourable opinion of your sex; and although we have been married five years'——

'Six, Charles, in September.'

'Six! Ah, so it is. How the time flies. I declare it seems but yesterday. What was I saying? Oh, that although we have been married six years'——

'We don't repent it, do we, Charles, dear?' said Kate, whose good-humour appeared now to be quite restored.

'No, indeed, Kitty; but that is no reason, as I see, that I should be blind to your little faults, or that you should be blind to mine. You are not angry at my sermonising, are you, Kate?'

'O dear, no; but really, dear, without any nonsense, servants are so tiresome. Gentlemen have always business or something which occupies them all day long away, and they don't see what we poor mistresses have to put up with at home. If your temper, Charles, was only half as much tried as mine is sometimes half-a-dozen times in a day, I am sure you would—— But, good gracious! what is that?' cried my wife, starting to her feet at the sound of an awful crash in the drawing-room over our heads.

'Why, hang it, Kate,' said I, rushing to the door, 'somebody has upset the aquarium. That clumsy blockhead, Thomas, I'll be bound. I told you that you never would make a page of him, and you ought not to have tried. I'll send him about his business in a'——

'If you please, mem,' said Susan, opening the door in my face—'if you please, mem, Tummas as upset the quarium a-shetting the shetters, and the neminies and other creturs is a-crawling all over the room.'

'For Heaven's sake, Kate, make haste, and see to it. We shall have ten gallons of salt water through the ceiling, if you don't. As for that stupid little fool, Thomas, I'll box his ears when I catch him. But, Kate, what on earth are you about? Why don't you go and see what is to be done?'

'Charles, my love,' said Kate, very slowly and emphatically, and without stirring from the corner of the sofa on which she had re-seated herself after the first moment of surprise and alarm—'Charles, my love, I have not so soon forgotten the admirable lesson which you have been so good as to give me. An accident of this kind is no greater fault in a page than it would be in a prince, and it would be wrong in us if the relationship in which we stand to the offender should tempt us to overwhelm him with a *torrent of invective.*'

I can't say—indeed, I have no idea—what other husbands would have done in a like situation, but without attempting a reply, I hastened to the scene of the disaster. Kate soon followed me; and for nearly an hour we were too busily engaged in directing the engineering operations necessary for the speedy draining of the lake which the blundering Thomas had made in the middle of the drawing-room, to speak or think of anything else. Our new carpet was completely spoiled, and the whole damage must have amounted to twenty pounds at the least; but though a careful and economical housewife, and devotedly attached to her furniture, Kate never uttered a word of complaint: indeed, I verily believe that she rejoiced at the occurrence.

HORSE AND MAN.

If ever myth found real interpretation and a visible home in modern days, that of the ancient Centaurs has certainly done so in Great Britain. No other country has ever prized the horse so highly, nor, it may be added, has ever so subordinated man to its nurture and development; nor is there any other nation of which a vast section is enriched or impoverished, subsists or starves, and lives or (sometimes) dies by the Horse alone.

In Arabia, indeed, the Horse is the poor man's only wealth, just as the pig or the ass may be said to be in this country, but it is not that upon which the hopes of thousands and the existence of hundreds are yearly set, and on which are built dreams of avarice which would be pronounced visionary indeed, but for their not seldom golden fulfilment. How the stories of the value of Arab Steeds sink into insignificance when we remember that, within the last few years, no less than 6500 guineas was given for *Hobbie Noble* at Warwick, and that that sum probably did not represent one-tenth of the money which its purchaser was risking upon its performances. No wonder that we read in the strange records* now before us that the owner of *Antonio* was betted a ten-pound note upon Doncaster race-course that he could not whistle as the horses were coming in for the great event; and that, as his horse passed by, ahead of all, a winner of such golden gains for him, he could only 'make a blow of it.' And yet those were the days of our grandfathers, who did not venture whole estates upon a single horse, as is done in modern times. *They* were contented to diversify the pursuits of the turf with meaner sports. Cocking was then the chosen amusement of the race-mornings, and many an old county family was as proud of the doings of its 'black reds' and 'birchen duckwings,' as of any of the knightly feats of its departed ancestors. A thousand chickens would be often sent out by a wealthy amateur in a single season, of which one-third, perhaps, would be fit to produce at an important main; with their fresh cut sods and purest gravel from the bottom of the Dee to scratch at, and with such diet as 'eggs, sugar-candy water, hot bread and milk, barley, rue, butter, and rhubarb,' we can well understand how the proverb arose of 'living like a fighting-cock;' they even met their death with a certain magnificence, always fighting 'in fair reputed silver spurs.'

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* *Silk and Scarlet.* By the Druid. Rogerson and Tuxford, Strand.

The growing passion for horse-racing, however, would have probably abolished Cocking even if parliament had not interfered, though there was at first a measure to that extravagance of the turf which has now scarcely any limit. We find the famous old John Day receiving in his youth from the Duke of Grafton a present of L.20 for winning two great races for him. 'It was a great present in those times,' says he, 'but since that I have got L.500 for winning one. It is, in fact, often a question of as great importance, that the best jockey should be engaged for a particular race, as that the best counsel should be retained in a law-case. When such sums are given for the mere riding a winner, it may be easily imagined what fearful temptations must the jockey be exposed to. It was an unspeakable source of comfort to one of this craft, at the close of a long life of turf experience, that he had at least been able to hold his own; and 'I've done as many as have done me,' was one of his latest expressions of consolation. Similarly, in all branches of turf transactions, the amount of money involved is found to be almost in all cases too great for the virtue of the persons engaged in them, who, besides, are not, for the most part, very severe moralists, even at starting. An eminent bill-discounter, whose horses run under a *nom de course*, had the pleasure of learning from the lips of a gentleman who was not aware of that circumstance, the reason of his mare's having the unfortunate word *fell* appended to her name in a recent race. 'I specially sent my horse,' explained the gentleman, 'to knock that fellow's mare heels over head, and he did it very cleverly.' Such instances of turf morality might of course be quoted by scores, but we gladly quit a subject, which, though not without its interest, must needs be painful to every Englishman who wishes his country well. It is only in a sporting volume, written expressly to advocate the race-course and its admirers, that we plumb the depths of English cunning and deceit, and learn with shame what degradations a large section of our fellow-countrymen are found to voluntarily embrace. What opinion must those foreigners have of our nation who derive their ideas of us from the specimens they meet with on the turf!

An especial victim to such gentry seems to have been the late Emperor Alexander of Russia, who, as well as his equerries, could be persuaded that 'spavins and Roman heads were rather a beauty than otherwise, and that ringbones and double joints were infallible indications of strength.' Luke Nott, one of his inferior sporting agents, seems to have made the most of his opportunities in this respect. 'He had an order for two cows from England, one for a nobleman, and the other for the empress, but the royal cow died on the passage, and the worst had to be led to the palace for inspection. "Why," asked the empress, "are three teats so large, and one so small?"

"It's all correct, please your majesty," said the ever-ready Luke; "three are for the milk, and the little one for the cream."

"Indeed," was the reply, and nothing more was said; but, as Mr Kirby used to remark, "I stood fairly trembling to hear the fellow tell such a wilful lee." Many had been sent off to Siberia for less, and it was all that Mr Kirby himself could once do, even while he basked in the royal sunshine, to persuade the guards that the porter-bottle, which burst in his pocket as he was smuggling it into the palace for one of the princes, was not the prohibited liquor of hated Britain, but "only frisky beer."'

Nicholas, however, was a very different sovereign from his predecessor, and he was a bold man indeed who would try to 'jockey' *him*.

'In 1853, twenty new English horses were being marched round and round, in their scarlet clothing, by the Russian grooms in uniform, in its square; and Mr Ashton, the English agent, was waiting all-anxious to hear what his majesty would think of the *Sheriff* by the *Provost*, for whom 3000 guineas had been refused after he won the *July*. The emperor, with Prince Menchikoff at his side, stepped out on the terrace to the instant. Thrice the ring moved round him. "Very good; that will do. But I think I told you three years ago, I would have no white heels," he said, as he challenged a beautiful bay mare.

"She was so good, your majesty, I daren't leave her," replied Mr Ashton; but "That may be—it's against the contract!" told that the stern imperial ukase against white knew no change. Then the *Sheriff* was beckoned out of the ring. "What size, Ashton?"

"Two artkeens and four veshlks, your majesty" (fifteen three). A fierce doubting look, almost as daunting as a glance at the sun on a summer's day, was the only reply vouchsafed; and in two mighty strides the Emperor of All the Russians was at his withers. "Beg pardon, Ashton, he's on short legs!" And so the bay and the black passed into the royal stables, and the latter never flinched beneath his royal nineteen-stone load at a review. He was the last horse that Nicholas gave orders on to his army, and he was led behind him on his funeral-day.' In the royal stables alone, in Nicholas's day, there were 600 chargers, and 600 in training; 1200 harness-horses, and 1200 in breaking, besides those at Moscow and Warsaw. The chargers were in the riding-school two years before the emperor mounted them, and if he had marked one for his own, when they first entered, he never forgot its name. 'All the picked chargers were divided between his four sons, when Nicholas died, five or six to each, and after the coronation, the whole establishment was diminished. "No more till further orders" was the ukase, and no more have been sent for yet.'

For the Agricultural School in France is shipped off periodically from this country a stock of horses of all kinds from blood thoroughbreds to Suffolk Punches. The French imperial carriage-horses are all bays, with the exception of one *attelage* of black browns. 'Harness, carriages, and everything else in the stable has all the English style, but thrice its elegance.' The imperial stud consists in all of 269 horses. Prussia and Austria import vast numbers of our blood-mares; and of English hunters, the king of Sardinia purchased no less than eight last spring for his own riding, at the rate of 300 guineas apiece. A few German half-breeds and some good bay carriage-horses from Denmark are all that we get from the continent in return.

English jockeys almost monopolise the foreign race-courses, as English dealers the markets, and sometimes experience strange fortunes. It was not long ago that one of them, after ascending the social ladder from stable-boy to prime minister, died Baron Ward, the right hand of the reigning Duke of Parma: while in a humbler sphere Jem Hill, well known to racing fame, met still later with an end mysterious and weird enough. While in charge of some horses for the king of Sardinia, which he was to deliver at Boulogne, he slipped between two steamers at the London Bridge quay, and it being dark, no one missed him till a letter arrived at home to say the horses had reached Boulogne by themselves, with their lip-strings not even undone. No clue was discovered till *the same steamer* which had transported them came back from France, and turned the poor fellow up from among the mud with her paddles, as he lay unnoticed close by the quay.

The volume from which we are deriving our information is of that disjointed, conversational charactercommon to most sporting-books; its first chapter, and by far its best, is a reminiscence of the hunting-days of the present century, and even of the close of the last, obtained by the editor in a truly characteristic manner from the mouth of a famous octogenarian sportsman whom he drives over the unforgotten scenes of his Meltonian exploits *in a gig*; nay, our author is so intent upon his note-book and the words of wisdom that fall from his venerable companion, that on one occasion he omits to hold the reins, and upsets the venerable gentleman, who has already broken every rib of his body in the hunting-field, and his collar-bone seven times.

Whether Knaves and Fools are decreasing in the world, we have no certain information, but there is certainly a decrease of that third species into which the great Lexicographer divided human-kind—the Fox-hunters. There are doubtless, now as formerly, vast numbers of persons who make a practice of hunting, who enjoy three times a week the delight of 'riding furiously after a nasty smell;' but these are not Fox-hunters pure and simple. Fox-hunting is made for them, and not they for Fox-hunting. We all remember the requiem of the *Times*, a few years back, upon the death of Assheton Smith, 'the fine old English gentleman' who spent some fifteen thousand a year for half a century upon the Horse, the Dog, and the Fox; whereat even Fox-hunters themselves were forced to acknowledge that there was certainly something to be said against that pastime as the end of life. The great men of the hunting-field are commonly either acknowledged sages or wits. Assheton Smith was a sage, and full of proverbial maxims—all of the horse, horsey—such as these: 'Throw your heart over, and your horse will follow,' said he, whenever he saw a centaur refuse his jump; and again he had this rebuke for impetuous youth: 'When a man rides at fences a hundred miles an hour, depend upon it he funks.' The famous Mr Mytton, on the other hand, was a wit, and of the rather practical kind. It is recorded of him, that having leaped over a fence into an unexpected gravel-pit some thirty feet deep, he lay there with his broken leg perfectly quiet, in hopes that he might have company. Presently a farmer comes down, horse and man, with grievous damage, and almost on the top of him. 'Why did you not warn me?' cries this unfortunate; 'why did you not hollo to me while there was yet time?' 'Hush, hush, you fool,' replies the humorist; 'hold your tongue, and we shall have the pit full of them!' A real sportsman would scarcely condescend to this sort of practical joking, although in old times Fox-hunting was often diversified by other sports, as Racing was by Cockings. Lord Barrymore used to take the hunting-field of Louis XIV. at Fontainbleau for his model, and 'his four Africans in scarlet and silver, and with French horns, on which they wound blasts loud enough to startle every outlying stag from his lair, kept him in music all day. The Barrymore fashion did not wholly die out with the old century, but it jumped with the humour of none save Colonel Thornton to adhere to it. He cared far more to see the Yorkshire woldsmen gaze in wonderment at his motley cavalcade, as it wound its way to Foxhunter's Hall, than for any sport he had when he got there. Fourteen servants, with hawks on their wrist; ten hunters, principally by his Jupiter; a pack of staghounds and lap-dog beagles, and a brace of wolves—against which the farmers soon levelled a round-robin—formed the advanced-guard. Two brace of pointers, and thrice as many greyhounds, headed by Major in rich buff and blue sheets, with armorial bearings, followed in their train; and his three eighty-guinea guns, and a box full of the plover-head feathers, with which alone he would condescend to fish, rumbled beyond in the wagon.'

In the prime of even Assheton Smith's days, a little pugilism was very attractive to the sporting soul; he himself was skilful with his fists, and much addicted to the use of them. Once he had a round with a carter at Leicester, who, he asserted, had touched his horse, which was tied to some rails, when he was in the bank. Then off he galloped to Quorn just as he was, and sent the man two pounds by his valet for turning on him so well. Afterwards putting a beef-steak on his swollen eye, and securing it by a night-cap, he was driven out in his carriage to a dinner-party, where he told the whole story, and what a brave fellow he had met. Speaking of these unorthodox matters, not certainly within the strict scope of his subject, our octogenarian sportsman has some curious reminiscences of the late Captain Barclay, a man whose feats have been often surpassed (once even by a woman) in our time, but who was in his own day unrivalled in what may be very fitly termed his particular 'walk.'

'Captain Barclay stayed a deal about Melton when Brummell was down at Belvoir. He was a great man with "the Beau." You wouldn't have put 'em together, would you? I've known the captain drink broth from the kennel boiler. Once, when he wur walking those great matches on a road, he met a regiment of soldiers; they formed into two lines, and let him pass, they thought so much of him. Such a real John Bull! He was never done talking of "The Chicken." He was a miner, or something like that, from Staffordshire or Dean Forest; blame me! my memory's so bad for them sort of dates. They catches him, and brings him up to London. Captain was down Holborn-way to meet him; he was quite amazed when he see him get off the coach all out of condition; no form at all. He thought he'd been done, they'd sent up such an account by post; but he put him on a good tap of porter, and he improved wonderful. He was always a-training of him; walking with him to keep him cheerful. Once two officers at an inn were for pitching into 'em because they'd got their breakfast-table; the waiter just whispers: "Barclay and Chicken," and they waits to hear no more. What curious expressions them fighting-men use! The captain once tell me he overhear one of 'em say when he wanted a match: "*Why won't you fight I? I ne'er did aught to offend yer.*"'

This adjuration, humorous as it is, does not excel some of the situations which horse-breaking sometimes entails upon its regular professors. A Mr Ellicott wished to sell a certain horse of his, in every way admirable except that he would have his own way in everything, so that it, and not the man, was the master. '"Sir," says he, naming a great sum, "I wouldn't take twice the money if I could ride him." Then Mr Marryott, he says: "I like his looks uncommonly; but if I buy him, and he will go to Leicester when I want to go to Nottingham, what's to be done then?—it will spoil my day's market." So Mr Ellicott says: "Come, let's go in; it's tea-time, and we will talk it over." We had tea and a bottle of wine, and they makes a bargain. Mr Marryott takes him home; and the very first time he rides him he stops dead at a gate. A man comes up, and Mr Marryott shouts to him: "Here's a shilling for you, my man; go to my house, and bring me the Leicester newspaper." Blame me! but he sat on his back six hours reading the newspaper. The horse wanted to come back, and tried it on several times, but he wouldn't let him. Now and then, he tries quietly to get him up to the gate, and about tea-time he does it. He then rode him through, making much of him. He was such a patient clever man he'd have sat on him for a week, and had his victuals and his umbrella sent him, rather than be beat. That evening he rode him to Kettleby, Grimstone, Asfordby, and so home, and opened all the gates on the road. He gave him no trouble no more; you see as time and good management brings all things to pass.'

Amid these strange and not uneventful records, we come upon some singular facts of natural history: in hotly hunted counties it does not seem unusual for the poor foxes to become 'foxes of the squirrel order,' and to make their habitation in trees. Some in Shropshire have roosted so high as thirty feet from the ground; and three were found at Barton-on-Sales in a single tree, one of which ran down the inside of the trunk. 'The Cantlop fox always resided in a tree, and Jack Wiglesworth knew almost to a yard where to go to, to whip him down. For five or six seasons, he was always lost near Cantlop Mill, as he went between the mill-wheel and the mill, and ran his line back when they were casting forward for Eaton Maskett. The miller honourably kept his secret, but he was worried at last with a trap round his foot; and the country people said that he lifted up the earth when he was buried, and mourned for him, as an old county worthy with a vested right in a mill.'

The fox-hounds, tended with a care and affection far beyond what is often vouchsafed by man to his fellow-creatures, we would have imagined to have been the happiest of four-footed creatures; but they too, it seems, have their troubles, and those sometimes of a very terrible sort. When the huntsman hears that Pliant has been very odd with the other hounds, and wished to fight with Stately, who has puppies, and when the latter 'scream and scramble up the wall, one upon another, as though in ghostly terror,' and the whole pack 'begin to play antics, pick up straws, and try to tear the bricks out of the wall'—then he knows that something is about to happen very terrible indeed. There will soon be nothing for it but simply 'to watch with a twelve-feet ash-pole, and a noose at the end, and drag them out morning after morning to their doom, for the whole kennel has gone mad.' Nay, masters of hounds themselves are by no means without Black Care sitting behind their saddles; they are constantly beset with a terror of a very peculiar kind. The great Lord Hastings and the great Mr Assbeton Smith had always the dread before their eyes of getting above their hunting weight. The court-beauty and the fox-hunter, it seems, have a common fear of their getting too fat. His lordship, says our octogenarian, often only had one bit of dry toast and an egg in a morning, 'for fear of putting hisself up;' while Mr Assbeton Smith was 'such a one for weighing hisself' that *he took his weighing-machine about with him wherever he went.*

TROUBLES AT SANDSTONE.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER I.—THE LOW ROCKS.

'I SAY, Michael, that wur rather a hard sayin'—that text o' the minister's this morning, eh?'

The old sailor looked up into his companion's face, and puffed away slowly at his pipe. Finding no response there, he lifted up a corner of his glazed hat, scratched his head, and looked out to sea: old Bowes was puzzled.

'It's a hard sayin' for some on us, I know,' continued the old man after a brief pause. 'If our righteousness must exceed that o' the Scribes and Pharisees, it's a bad look-out for somebody, I'm thinking. There isn't one among the whole lot as wouldn't come a long way ahead o' me. I allus thought Scribes was out-and-out Christians.'

'Ye ain't read your Bible, then, to much use,' said Michael Hawser, the sun-browned, stern-faced man at his side.

'Well, I can't say as I have, much. I'm a bad hand at readin', 'cept in them sort o' letters.' He pointed with his pipe to a boat lying on the sands near. 'If they'd only print Bibles in them now, I'd get on; but they don't, you see, so I'm sure to drop asleep if ever I try to overhaul the old chart. It's a bad look-out, I'm afraid, Michael.'

The old man gave a queer smile. There was a curious mixture of levity and earnestness in his manner. His eye, with a quiet humour in its twinkle, was keen as a hawk's; his face, bronzed and puckered with wrinkles, was shrewd and intelligent; his figure was short, sinewy, and sailor-like. Jim Bowes, in fact, looked like what he was—a rough old water-dog, who had grown gray and shaggy amidst the winds and waves, without ever troubling himself about the other shore that bounds the sea of life. Some thoughts of that other shore were now perhaps stirring in his mind, as he sat and gazed on the waters from under the brim of his glazed hat. His eye was fixed on the horizon, and he puffed away in silence.

There was an old bond of union between those two men sitting under the shadow of the cliff that hot summer's day. They had served together on board a man-of-war in their youth, and though their paths in life had lain apart since, and Michael Hawser was now a thriving rope and sail maker, while Jim Bowes was but little richer or wiser than he had been thirty years ago, they never forgot how they had struggled on together as lads. For years past, Jim Bowes had rarely set foot on shore without running over to Sandstone to see his prosperous friend; and now, when the old fellow had renounced the sea, he had come to end his days in the village whence they had started out together (one summer morning, forty years ago) to join his majesty's ship *Dauntless* to go and fight the French, and one day see the smoke of Trafalgar.

Jim Bowes still puffed his pipe in silence, and gazed on the horizon. If ever circumstances were favourable for contemplation, it was now, at such an hour as this. It was Sunday afternoon, 'most calm, most bright;' the sea was a living sheet of light; the sky, a cloudless stretch of blue. Save the drowsy lapping of the water round the old boat, rocking idly to and fro near, not a sound could be heard. The whole shore lay bright and solitary under the sun, and nothing stirred but the mirage quivering in the distance. All Sandstone, with the exception of the two men sitting under the rocks at the end of the bay, seemed to have succumbed to the drowsy influences of that hot summer afternoon.

'Michael!' broke out old Bowes suddenly, '*what is* a Pharisee? I'm darned if I can make it out.'

It was evident that the morning's sermon had made an impression on the old sailor. Godless and careless as had been the threescore years of his life, some serious train of thought had been awakened by the solemn words he had heard that day in the little chapel frequented by the fishermen of Sandstone.

'A Pharisee, Jim? You want to know what a Pharisee is?' said Michael Hawser gravely. 'I'll tell ye then.'

Now Michael Hawser, the rope-maker, was a deacon of the aforesaid chapel—a man of uncompromising piety, and said to be skilled in all matters of doctrine; consequently, Jim knew he was coming to head-quarters for his information.

'A Pharisee, Jim,' began the Gamaliel of Sandstone, 'is a great sinner—greater p'raps nor you, and that's bad enough. He's a proud, self-righteous sinner, and looks down on all his fellow-creatures as no better than—than'——

'Sprats,' suggested Jim.

Michael nodded and went on: 'Yes, and there's plenty on 'em in the world. There's Pharisees about here, well as elsewhere. That man's a Pharisee who lives up yonder (he pointed with his thumb to a pretty cottage near the edge of the cliff); that man thinks you and me no better than the dirt under his feet: he's a Pharisee. He won't come to our chapel, but goes up to Lynmouth every Sunday (a good four miles), because we poor fisher-folk here ain't good enough for him. He'll have to put up with some on us in heaven, I'm thinking. The Lord won't make fish o' one and flesh o' another i' that way. We're all alike afore him, Bowes.'

'Humph!' grunted Jim; 'so Captain Linders is a Pharisee, is he? Didn't know that afore. Pharisees make good captains, then, it 'pears. I sailed wi' him to Jamaicay once, and never had a better time. It was afore he entered the revenue sarvice, and come to live down here. Air there any more Pharisees you may know of i' these parts?

'Ay, ay, Bowes, there are plenty more—plenty more, sinners o' all sorts. Sandstone is but a small place, but the devil's got his harvest even here. There's some good seed sown in the field, but the Enemy has been and planted tares among the wheat. I see it growing up wi' my own eyes. I see our little village gettin' worse and worse every day—more sin and vice in the place, and less love for God's ways. This very last week, I had to turn a member out of our chapel, and I'd do it agen to-morrow, sooner than I'd see any evil goings on unrebuked.'

'What! it's true, then, is it? You've turned Sue Watson out o' your chapel, have yer? What's that fur?' The old sailor knitted his brows, and laid down his pipe on the stones.

'Because I've found her out. She's a bad hussy, and no decent girl ought to come near her. I'll have no black sheep in our fold.'

'Yer don't mean to say that Sue'——

'I mean to say she ain't fit to enter the Lord's house, nor touch the skirt o' an honest girl's gown, as she passes her by. That's what comes o' having one o' the soldiers at Lynmouth barracks for a sweetheart. It all came out as soon as his regiment was ordered off on service. But I wasn't going to have the scandal of her coming back to chapel and sitting with my daughters and the rest of the young women, just as if nothing had happened. No, no! So last Sunday night, after meeting, I spoke out my mind before 'em all, and bid her never shew her face there again.'

'It would be a cruel grief to her mother, Michael. She was mighty proud o' Sue,' said Jim Bowes, shaking his head. 'It's a con'——

Jim remembered the sermon in time, and stopped.

'Bowes, you're an old man, and should know better than to use them fool's words. Ye think I've done hardly towards this girl, do ye? There's need enough for some on us to speak up, let me tell you; and I'll do it, Jim, as long as I've breath. You've been away mostly on your voyages, and not seen much on us except by odd times; but I've kept at home, and know what's going on around. It's in my place to speak the Lord's words without fear or shame, and so I will. I didn't spare you this morning when I found you loitering outside the beer-house, instead of going to meeting, no, nor I wouldn't spare my own flesh and blood, if I saw them going astray. Thank God, though, there's no fear o' *that!* My children ain't been brought up like some o' my neighbours.'

Oh, the air of solemn pride with which Michael Hawser uttered those words! He rose, and shading his face with his hand, looked back towards the spot where Sandstone lay dazzling in the centre of the bay. The village consisted of only one street, that straggled up from the beach to the main road on the top of the cliff. It was inhabited principally by fishermen and old worn-out seamen and pilots from Lynmouth, who had retired there to end their days in sight of the ocean.

'Yonder comes one o' my girls,' said Michael; 'she's going wi' me to the school-house to hear the bairns read.'

As he spoke, a young woman appeared on the sands, looking up and down the bay, as though in search of some one.

'Ahoy! ahoy!' shouted Michael Hawser, standing on a great block of stone, and waving his hand aloft. The signal was heard, and the girl hastened down towards them. She was breathless with running when she came up, and, with her beautiful lips parted open, and her brown hair waving about her temples, stood flushed and panting before them.

'Where's Martha? Why ain't she here?' asked Michael, as his daughter approached.

'She's not well, father. I think it was too hot for her at chapel this morning. She's been very faint-like ever since, and so I made her go and lie down.'

Ellen Hawser's face bloomed with health and energy. The inefficiency of Michael's eldest daughter was a thorn in his side. Martha was often ill, and unable to attend her Bible class. She had been weakly, and unable to do any rough work ever since her birth; but she knew more, read more, and thought more than any one in the village. Had her bodily strength equalled her religious zeal, she would have been a valuable aid to her father.

'Humph!' muttered Michael; 'the brightest sword is the soonest dulled; the willing servant is the weakest. The Lord chooses strangely. Come, Ellen, it's time we were off. Good-day, Bowes.'

'Stop a minute, father; I want a bit o' the sea-flower for Martha.' The young girl sprang on to a large boulder near, and ran swiftly down the low rocks running out into the sea.

Ellen Hawser knew every hole and cranny of Sandstone 'Brig,' as the dangerous reef of rocks that gave a sad notoriety to this part of the coast was termed, and she leaped from stone to stone with a step that knew no fear. The limpets that clung to their weed-bound bases were not more at home on these sea-crags than she. It would have made a town-lady giddy to behold her, as she balanced herself over the deep pool where slept the crimson weed-leaves in a bath of emerald green.

'Won't you give old Jim a bit o' your sea-posy, my dear?' cried old Bowes, as she came running back to catch her father.

'Yes,' said Ellen with a mischievous smile, and drawing near, she showered down on the old sailor a rain of spray from the dripping sea-weed.

The old fellow jumped up in pretended anger, but Ellen was already gone, and stood laughing at him far ahead.

'That's a bright lass,' said old Bowes to himself. 'Lor', how time flies! She wor only that high t' other day, and now she's a woman grown. Well, some must grow up, and some must grow down, I s'pose!'

With which philosophical reflection, old Bowes sat down again. His pipe was out, the heat was unabated, and the shelter of the cliffs behind was very grateful. The idea he had just started inclined to, and the lull of the low-tide waves provoked to, somnolence. Habit and a good dinner did the rest.

The waves broke with a gentle roar on the further rocks; Jim Bowes drowsed. The ripples ran inshore with a soothing murmur; Jim Bowes nodded. The water gurgled back again out of the pools; Jim Bowes slept. Not Neptune himself, had he set all the shells and conches of his sea-gods blowing, could have now aroused his drowsy son until he had had his sleep out.

The sun sank, the shadow of the cliffs lengthened out upon the waves, the air grew cooler, and the tide drew nearer; still Jim Bowes slept. Oh! monarch of the silver main, arouse the slumbering man. Thou art wanted, Jim Bowes—wanted now, if ever thou wert. There is peril at hand, and good work to do. See that dark figure creeping along the rocks down towards the sea! She comes on a terrible errand. O wake, and save her!

But the old sailor sleeps soundly as before, and dreams not that a soul is hovering between life and death, a few yards from where he lies. That dark shadow which has just passed over the spot where he lies sleeping, is creeping slowly down to the lower rocks, where the pools are deep and still. She is gazing with dull, tearless eyes into those clear green wells of water, that woo her, by their silence and secrecy, to end her sorrows in their depths. 'The village is all quiet and still; friends and enemies are away; now is the time,' thinks Susan Watson, 'to escape out of life.'

Awake, old seaman, ere it be too late! She is bidding farewell to the old home behind her, to the rocks and stones on which her childish feet have played; another moment, and it may all be over.

But not a zephyr stirs the old man's hair; not the flutter of a sea-bird's wing breaks the silence that broods over those lonely rocks. Stay! a wandering bee, strayed far from hive and honey-beds, comes booming by through the salt air, and drops upon the sleeper's face. A hand is raised to drive away the intruder, and the slumberous chain that has bound Jim Bowes for the last three hours is broken. He yawns, sits up, and looks around him.

The golden light has turned to gray; the glare has faded off from sea and sky. It is evening, and the tide is running in freshly. Right out upon the furthest rock, sits a woman with a shawl drawn over her head. The tide is rising fast, and in a few minutes, the point whereon she sits will be surrounded by deep water. Jim Bowes gazes, then rubs his eyes, and gazes again: he is half bewildered. The next moment he is on his feet. The woman's back is turned to him, but he has recognised her.

'It's Sue Watson!' he mutters; the rest he divines instinctively.

She has come there to drown herself. How is he to act? A word or shout, and she will plunge headlong into the sea. A cold sweat breaks out on the old man's brow; but there is no time to pause. He draws off his shoes, and the next minute is making his way towards her with a stealthy step. He is only a few yards from the girl's side when she rises, throws off her shawl, and gives a wild look out to sea. The low, broken-hearted wail that escaped her lips at that moment haunted Jim Bowes for many a day. In another moment, the waters would have closed over her head, had not a strong arm grasped her round the waist.

'Sue Watson! Have ye forgot your mother—yer poor old mother?' says a stern voice in her ear.

'Let me go—let me go! Who is it?' The girl wrestles franticly in his grasp.

'No, Sue; I'm come to save you. Ye can't get away from me. I'm here to stop this sinful death you'd be after.'

The girl moaned, and hid her face, then struggled to get free again. She fights for death as others do for life; the deep sea beckoning her to its bosom. Her long hair came unbound, and hung all loose about her; the old sailor gently smoothed it off her face. The action seemed to strike her. She raised her eyes, and looked at him.

'You know me, Sue? You know old Bowes, eh? Then be quiet then, and let me take you away from this place.'

He half carried, half led her off the rocks, moaning to herself all the while.

'Not home—not home!' she muttered, as they drew near the cliffs.

Her eyes were dry, and had that look—hot, fierce, yet timorous, as of a hunted beast—so terrible in human eyes.

'No, no; I know. I wouldn't take you home yet. I've brought you here to talk to you awhile, and see if I can calm your poor heart a bit. Sit ye down there, on my old coat, my dear.'

Susan Watson stared at the speaker for a moment, as though she only half comprehended him; then she heaved a great sigh.

'Them's the first kind words I've heard for many a day. God bless you for 'em, Jim;' and with a sob that seemed to rend her heart, she threw herself on the ground, and burst out weeping.

Jim stood by, and let the healing waters flow: he knew they would drain her heart of some of its bitterness. Erelong, her sobs grew weaker. She raised herself on her elbow, and said: 'Ye'll promise me one thing, Jim? Ye'll never tell them what—what I was going to do, will ye?'

'I promise you, my lass,' said the old sailor solemnly.

'I'll never be able to hold up my head in Sandstone—never more. I'll go away, as I meant to do; but I wouldn't have mother know that I tried to'——

'Your mother, nor nobody else, need never know. But you mustn't talk about leaving home; you must stay here, and face your troubles—that's what you must do. You've got brothers and sisters as is younger than you, and your mother is getting old. You must stay and work for them, Sue.'

The girl sighed, and shook her head.

'I couldn't. Hasn't it nearly turned my brain already? I'd go mad here. O Jim, think o' the jeers I have to bear wi', the hard speech and bad words; and then, the chapel and Michael Hawser!'

She shuddered as she pronounced that name, so terrible to all offenders, and hid her face in her shawl.

'There's no knowing, my lass, what you can do or bear till you try. You've a hard time before you, but it wouldn't mend matters to run away. Stay here, Sue, and do your duty, and then—— What, the Lord, is that light out yonder!'

The old sailor had suddenly stopped, and stood looking out to sea with a keen eye.

'Do you see it, Susan? Yonder, just in a line with the low rocks!'

There was a red glow visible on the horizon. It looked like a cloud tinged by the setting sun, which still flushed the sky. Susan said it was that; but the old mariner shook his head.

'That's no cloud—that's no cloud,' he muttered. But even while he spoke, the appearance grew so cloud-like, that he half doubted after all.

'Susan!' he said suddenly, after standing in silence for a minute. 'You can steer, eh?'

There were few girls born and bred in Sandstone who could not.

'Then come along.' Without another word, he led her away to a boat lying on the sands a little way off, bade her help him to run it down to the water's-edge, then ran to the boat-house, and fetched out oars and benches. In five minutes more, he had placed her at the stern, and had pushed off from shore. Susan obeyed his orders mechanically. There was a decision and an energy about the old man that would at any time have been hard to withstand. In her present state, Susan could not have resisted him, had she wished.

They sped away in silence. The old sailor drew long and vigorous strokes, and the boat shot swiftly through the water. Ere the chapel-goers of Sandstone had finished their evening devotions, three miles were placed between them and the shore.

Evening was gathering in, and a cold, slate-coloured hue spreading over sea and sky; still the red cloud flamed on the horizon.

But no; it was no longer a cloud; within the last few minutes, and in the gathering gloom, it had taken another and distincter form. The old sailor beheld the change, and he turned and regarded Susan Watson steadily in the face.

'Sue, it's a ship o' fire!'

The words came hoarse and low from his lips. He rested on his oars, and looked anxiously at his companion.

'Dare you go on or not, Sue? Remember, there's men in agony out yonder!'

'Yes, go on, Jim,' was her reply.

He could see her face in the waning light; it was white, but calm and brave; so he dipped in his oars, and rowed on again.

How slowly the boat seemed to advance over the tranquil water! With that fearful beacon flaring before their eyes, how interminable seemed the distance! As the twilight deepened, the light from the burning ship grew brighter. Erelong the glow of the flames shone round them on the waves, and tinged Susan's white cheek with a lurid glow.

'She must ha' been on fire some hours,' said Jim, looking towards the vessel; 'she seems a'most burnt to a shell. Poor souls! we're too late, I fear.'

'No, no! Look, Jim, look! There's two men aboard,' cried his companion suddenly. 'O Lord, save them; they'll perish!'

As Susan Watson spoke, two figures were distinctly visible, clinging to the bowsprit; the next moment, a cloud of smoke obscured them. Jim Bowes said not a word, but rowed on till the sweat rained down his face.

Suddenly a faint shout reached their ears, and the smoke-cloud parted open; Jim answered the shout by a hearty cheer, then bent over his oars, and rowed on again.

But ere he had made five strokes more, a cry of horror broke from his companion's lips, and, following the direction of her eyes, he beheld the bowsprit part from the ship and fall into the sea, carrying the miserable men along with it.

TRADE-MARKS.

Whenever an honest manufacturer stamps manufactured articles with his name, cipher, or mark, or affixes a label of similar purport, he tenders a guarantee that the articles shall be what they profess to be. If he adheres steadily to this principle, and takes care that his products bear out the promises made in reference to them, his mark gradually acquires a great commercial value; so great, indeed, that it may be alone worth a fortune to him. Any other persons who appropriate this mark, commit a wrong equivalent to that of an actual robbery. What the stamped device is on an English sovereign or shilling, the trade-mark is on the products of an honest trader; it is a pledge of quality. Professor Levi states that the trade-marks of British manufacturers are more respected abroad than those of any other nation. The largest portion of such articles is sold in foreign markets by virtue of such marks alone; and the prices vary according to the different sorts of marks. That the quality will correspond with the mark, that the bulk will be fairly represented by the sample, is the foundation of this confidence.

What kind of mark the manufacturer or trader may adopt, is a matter of little consequence. It may be his name, a seal, a vignette, a letter, a cipher. It may be a peculiarly coloured wrapper; or something adhesive applied to the surface; or something stamped into the surface. It may be an emblem of a cross, a bird, a quadruped, a castle, a star, a comet, a sun. It may be a view of a public establishment; a combination of initial letters; almost anything will suffice, in short, provided it has not been hitherto employed as a distinctive mark of other but similar products. Simple initials, without any other distinction, are worth little, seeing that there may be many manufacturers bearing names with the same initials, who would have a right to use the same mark. Then, again, 'Holloway's Ointment,' 'Bass's Pale Ale,' 'Glenfield Patent Starch,' 'Taylor's Persian Thread,' 'Neville's Digestive Bread,' 'Dauglish's Aërated Bread,' &c., are better marks, because the name of the maker, combined with that of the article, defines the latter in a specific way. Manchester cotton-yarn has generally a lion, or some other device, printed in colours on a ticket, pasted or otherwise fastened to the bundle. Shirtings and some other kinds of woven goods have the names of the manufacturers printed in red or blue on the piece itself. Bar-iron has the trade-mark stamped into it. Iron of all kinds has generally a mark consisting of initials enclosed in some kind of boundary-line. Any one examining with a little attention the articles of food which he may purchase in a prepared state, his clothing, his furniture, and the countless things around him, will soon observe how very diversified are the trade-marks adopted by manufacturers.

Some evasions of trade-marks can scarcely be heard of without a smile. A Burlington Arcade Perruquier introduced a 'Medicated Mexican Balm,' to which he prefixed his name; whereupon a neighbour speedily advertised *his* 'Medicated Mexican Balm;' a quarrel and a lawsuit ensued, ending in the award of protection to the trade-mark. Professor Holloway's pills and ointments may or may not be worthy of the puffery which surrounds them; but it was an obviously mean trick when another person, taking advantage of the same name, opened a shop within the distance of a few houses, and advertised 'H. Holloway's Pills and Ointment;' which was another case brought before the law-courts. A third lawsuit exhibited the following facts: Mr Crawshay, the eminent ironmaster of South Wales, marks his iron by 'W. Crawshay,' or 'W. C.,' enclosed in a ring. In 1837, he observed on Mr Thompson's wharf some bars of iron bearing a mark which he at first supposed to be his own, but which, on closer inspection, he found to be 'W. O.' enclosed in a ring. He ascertained, moreover, that this mark commonly passed in the Turkish market for his own (Crawshay's) mark. Although this trade-mark was not exactly like Crawshay's, yet the O which was substituted for the C was, when combined with the W and the ring, a proof of imitation. That Thompson was aware of this imitation, was rendered clear; but there was an absence of technical proof of an *intention* to imitate. Mr Linnell, the eminent painter, painted a picture and put his name to it; a copy of this picture, name and all, got into the market. That this was an infringement of a trade-mark, and something worse, is clear enough; yet, through the bewildering inconsistencies of the English law, the perpetrator of the fraud escaped both on the charge of forgery and on that of obtaining money on false pretences. One George Borwick invented what he called 'Baking Powder,' and 'Egg Powder,' sold in packets, with his name printed on the wrapper. A dealer, failing to sell his own 'Baking Powder,' applied to a printer to print 10,000 labels as nearly as possible like Borwick's, except the signature. This signature had been rendered invisible by the peculiar wrapping of Borwick's packets, until the wrapper was torn off; and therefore the cunning cheat deemed himself in this particular safe.

Many of these deceptive packets were sold as Borwick's before the scheme was discovered.

Not very long ago, a large quantity of spurious ale was seized, labelled 'Allsopp's Ale,' just as it was about to be exported to America; the trade-mark was so obviously an appropriation that a severe punishment followed the proof of the offence. There is a certain kind of fodder called 'Thorley's Food for Cattle;' and an imitator was detected making use of the very casks, as well as the trade-mark, to dispose of an inferior cattle-food of his own concocting. Messrs Dent, the largest glove-manufacturers in this country, frequently meet with 'Dent & Co.' stamped in red ink, according to their customary plan, on gloves which never came from their warehouse; and in some cases they have been able to mulct the wrong-doers in heavy damages. Mr Sykes made shot-belts and powder-flasks, on which he stamped 'Sykes' Patent;' another Mr Sykes did the same thing, and stamped, 'Sykes' Patent.' Both were right in the name Sykes, both were wrong in using 'patent' for an article which had not been patented; but the court decided that, so far as it went, 'Sykes' Patent' was a trade-mark, not to be imitated by the second Sykes. Mr Blofield made hones for razors, and wrapped them in certain paper; another person obtained some of these papers, and sold inferior hones in them; this was decided to be illegal. Similar proceedings have been detected in reference to Day and Martin's blacking labels.

Whatever be the actual decision in any particular trial, it is unquestionable that the English law recognises the right of property in trade-marks. The law requires three things to be proved, however—that there has been an imitation of the trade-mark; that the imitation was purposely made with a fraudulent intent; and that an injury has actually been caused by the imitation, or a loss incurred. It unfortunately happens that, by the adroitness of counsel, a loophole is too often found for the escape of a man whom no one doubts to have been guilty of this kind of unworthy deception. The way in which Professor Levi states the *modus operandi* of the law, will shew how many things have to be done to obtain damages for the imitation of a trade-mark: 'In order to establish a right to damages, it would have to be proved that the defendant had adopted a trade-mark so like the mark of the plaintiff as to be calculated to impose upon ordinary persons, and to induce them to believe that the goods were the plaintiff's goods; and also, that the acts complained of were done with the intention to deceive. The plaintiff himself must be accustomed to use a certain mark to denote that the goods so marked were of his own manufacture. He must prove that such mark was well known and understood in the particular trade, and that the defendant had adopted the mark and sold the goods bearing it, with intent to deceive.'

The most striking cases of the evasion of trade-marks are attributable to foreigners, who avail themselves surreptitiously of the fame of English manufacturers. Once, now and then, the fraud is in the opposite direction; and if we knew all, perhaps we should find that foreign manufacturers have a grievous right to complain of nimble-witted English adventurers. The never-dying 'Jean Maria Farina' came into an English court of law, not very long ago, to demand justice. Relying on the confusion between the many Eau-de-Cologne makers who assume this name, an English printer imitated a label with the signature 'Jean Maria Farina, gegenüber dem Julich Platz,' with a peculiar flourish, and also a stamp and a seal. Although a Prussian subject, Farina was able, in this particular instance, to obtain justice in an English court of law. A second case relates to the 'Duc de Montebello's Champagne,' a kind of wine much prized for its superior quality. It is brought into this country in bottles of a peculiar make, with distinguishing labels. An English firm imitated the bottles and labels, filled the bottles with gooseberry wine, and passed off the sophistication as the famed Montebello Champagne. The law-courts, rightly enough, granted the duke protection against this and similar frauds, declaring that the make of the bottle was a trade-mark, as well as the contents of the label. A very similar case was that of the Count de Zara's liqueur 'Maraschino,' made on that nobleman's estate in Hungary; the bottles and labels were imitated in London, and a sham maraschino sold. The courts, in this matter likewise, granted an injunction. A fourth instance is that of the Collins Company, manufacturers of a very superior kind of edge-tools, at their factory at Hartford, in the United States. They stamp on their manufactured articles the words, 'Collins & Co., Hartford, cast-steel, warranted;' and also affix labels, on which is printed, 'Look for the stamp Hartford, if you want the genuine Collins & Co.' A Birmingham merchant was clearly proved to have imitated the trade-mark and labels of this company, and to have been in the habit of selling and exporting tools so stamped as being the tools of the Company. Happily, the law was clear enough to render justice in this case.

Of the strange way in which English trade-marks are borrowed on the continent, or by foreigners chiefly trading on the continent, a few examples may be given, chiefly on the authority of Professor Levi.

In the steel-trade, it is a common practice with the German manufacturers to produce a low-priced and inferior article, wretchedly bad, upon which they unscrupulously impress the trade-marks of the most celebrated Sheffield and other makers. Files marked with the full names of the leading Sheffield firms are made in Germany, and are sent to other countries as British goods, at such prices as *real* British goods could not possibly compete with. A peculiar fish-hook knife, made by Bateman, sells at 3s. 6d. per dozen; but a false 'Bateman' is sent out by a Prussian firm at 1s. 5d. Needles, at 10d. per thousand, are sent out under the guise of British needles, which cannot be sold at less than 3s. Sometimes the deceivers are clumsy in their spelling, as in one instance where they printed labels relating to 'Genuine improved sprig steel, fra the manufactry of William Grafes & Sonns, *Zawd* Works, Sheffield;' but, generally speaking, they are faithful forgers. Occasionally they exhibit surpassing impudence. Some time ago, Mr Redfern, a file manufacturer, deemed it necessary to print, on labels attached to the wrappers of parcels, the following announcement: 'John Redfern begs leave to state that frequent and various attempts have been made to imitate his files with spurious articles; to prevent such imposition in future, please to observe none are of his manufacture but those stamped S*Q, and labelled on the outside wrapper with the same mark and his name'—with something more to the same effect. Very soon afterwards, it was discovered that a German house had *copied the whole of this caution*, making their packets of files to exactly resemble those of Redfern's in external appearance—his virtuous indignation included. Another Sheffield manufacturer adopted a printed label, containing his name and other particulars, a trade-mark, and the words, 'to imitate which is felony.' The Germans copied this—'felony' and all! The Goldsmiths' Company Hall-mark, upon gold watch-cases, is pirated to a very great extent in America, upon gold below the English standard; watches are bought up in this country without the cases; cases are made in America, with the figure '18' marked upon them, as indicating 18 carats fine, whereas the quality of the gold may not be more than 14 or 15 carats fine—that is, 14 or 15 of pure gold to 10 or 9 of alloy; and then purchasers are made to believe that they possess a watch bearing the highly-prized London guarantee trade-mark. Many London watchmakers of eminence have found their names stamped on watches which never came from their own shops; this is especially done in Switzerland, from which country the watches find their way to India, and elsewhere. Mr Leech, an English cotton manufacturer, was driven into a Calcutta court of law against a certain native, who, by imitating a particular trade-mark belonging to fine sheetings, and placing it on sheetings of inferior quality, had made large profits, and had injured the fair fame of the manufacturer. Lea and Perrin's Worcestershire Sauce, Rodgers's Sheffield cutlery, Peisse and Lubin's perfumery, Irish linens, and many other commodities manufactured in Great Britain or Ireland, are largely imitated in the United States; or rather, an unfair sale of inferior goods is effected by the use of trade-marks properly belonging to the genuine articles.

There is a laxity about all this which every right-minded person must regret. Many of the manufacturers who do these things are drawn into it by the custom of their trade, rather than by intentional roguery. Birmingham, perhaps, is about as honest as any of our large centres of industry; yet it is said to be a very frequent custom there for the manufacturers to receive orders from merchants to affix to the manufactured articles particular trade-marks; the thing is done as a matter of course. The manufacturer either does not trouble himself about the morality of the matter, or he relies on the respectability of the merchant for his having authority to act as the agent of the persons whose trade-marks are thus used. The frauds such as have lately come under public notice, where a warehouseman insisted that '300 yards' should be stamped on a reel of cotton containing much less than that quantity, are of a different character; they are departures from honesty, declaring things to be that which they are not; but they are not surreptitious appropriations or imitations of trade-marks.

AN AID TO CONVERSATION.

The town of Bridgeford, which lays claim to being my dwelling-place, is not a very big one, but its inhabitants pique themselves much upon what they call their 'enlarged ideas.' We have a 'comprehensive grasp' of every subject with which we have to deal; we take an 'extended view' of every matter which we have to consider; and we have, in short, what painters call a 'free touch' in our representations of everything. In speaking of this, our boasted peculiarity, we should not have made use of one only of the above sentences, but of all three of them; our freedom of touch causes us to take up some space; we think it rather a dexterous thing to repeat the same idea in different words—to be prolific in synonyms; our extended views, combined with our extended way of expressing them, make us, in fact, slightly verbose; we do not so much converse as lecture; we do not argue, but prefer to preach at one another.

And how we *do* preach! Not only in our churches, chapels, and synagogues — although, even in that respect, Catholic and Episcopalian, Presbyterian and Free Church, Jumper and Jew, all preachers whatsoever amongst us, do, as it appears to me, for length, at all events, whip the world—but in our dining-rooms and drawing-rooms also, there is perpetual preaching. Political Preaching, Educational Preaching (before which the duration of a Spurgeon-sermon pales), Literary Preaching, Scientific Preaching, Natural History Preaching (catalogues of the contents of the Ark), Metaphysical Preaching (a mixture of darkness, chaos, and eternity), Poetical Preaching, and Preaching proper, or Theological.

What astonishes a stranger who comes for the first time from the metropolis or elsewhere to Bridgeford, next to these universal monologues, is, how anybody can be got to listen to them; our patience, our forbearance, our uncomplaining submission, is the theme of his thoughts, and would be (if we suffered him to converse) of his conversation. Nor am I, Bridgeford man though I be, quite prepared, it must be confessed, with a satisfactory explanation of this. We seem incapacitated by nature from enjoying what is generally understood by sociality; it is not so much that we are inhospitable, as that we cannot be cordial; we are not, though strict enough in many things, absolutely Mohammedan-like with regard to liquor, yet all the drink in the cellaret somehow fails to make us genial. It seems rather to feed some awful duct, from which, sooner or later, the great Preaching arteries of our nature will be supplied to overflow. 'When the Wine is in, the Wit is out,' says the proverb; but it certainly does not apply to Bridgeford, or if it does, it, most assuredly, has no reference to that Wit of which brevity is said to be the soul. Nothing of the sort comes out of us, however exhilarated we may be. If I call on one of my bachelor-friends about supper-time, I hear, as I approach the door, a solemn monotone, uninterrupted by a laugh, or a cheer, or even a word. I think perhaps that he is at evening-prayers, and wait a few minutes; presently, I recognise the voice as belonging to one of our associates, who has a theory upon Colour, or Bookbinding, or Sculpture, or the best way of Pickling Cabbage, which he is expounding amid tobacco-smoke, and sherry, and unbroken silence, to admiring friends. There is food on the table, there are plenty of clever young fellows in the room—the elements, in any other place save Bridgeford, of high spirits and repartee, and invigorating and intellectual conversation — but still they prefer to be bored in this unaccountable manner. Or, if I visit a married friend, to enjoy in his domestic circle the invigorating Tea, there is monotone again booming down the well-carpeted staircase from the drawing-room; and there is a person in spectacles making it, who has dropped in to read a little volume upon insect-life (with digressive remarks of his own, where he disagrees with the author) to the four charming young ladies and their mamma, who are only acquainted, perhaps, with the Bee and the Flea, and have not the least interest beyond them. The host has, happily for himself, gone out for the evening, but probably only to the same sort of thing in another form, a Preaching, a Lecture, a Didactic Essay, or a Discussion conducted by one person.

Our capacity for listening is the more remarkable since we exercise it without hope of reciprocity of talk; we have no ambition to inflict these Addresses (which is the transatlantic name for them) in our own turn upon others; each set amongst us has a Gamaliel, under which it sits, and is content to sit, mum, glum, dumb. And the Gamaliel knows it, and takes the very utmost possible advantage of the circumstance.

To interrupt the stream of eloquence of one of these persons is to strike a blow at civilisation—Bridgeford civilisation—itself. He may be a lord, he may be a professor, he may be the tacitly admitted chieftain of his *coterie* from various reasons, but he is their socially appointed preacher, and therefore a high-priest whom it is rank blasphemy so much as to answer. The Gamaliel of the particular set to which I belong, the centre of my Bridgeford circle, entertains peculiar ideas regarding the Pope. It is as impossible to keep the Pope out of this gentleman's mind, and (which is worse) out of his talk, as it was to eliminate Charles I. out of Mr Dick's Memorial in *David Copperfield.* We are justly proud of this untiring mouthpiece of ours, and are always anxious to trot him out before astonished strangers; so that when my friend Tomkins of the metropolis came to visit me last month, it was arranged that we should afford him an intellectual treat, of which, of course, the principal dish was to be Alexandrine, our Gamaliel, garnished with his accompanying theory.

Tomkins (as I remembered him in my youth) was an intellectual person, and likely to appreciate this; an eloquent person, and therefore—as I thought—one bound to hail a brother-master of rhetoric. I anticipated from the proposed *conversazione*—for we retain, curiously enough, that title for our Bridgeford *réunions*, in spite of its inapplicability—the customary mental benefits, and the enforced admiration, in addition, of a talented stranger. The appointed evening arrived; my supper-table was duly furnished; my guests were all assembled; Tomkins was on my right hand; Alexandrine was opposite, to whom all ears were already turned to catch the precious jewels of his discourse; he introduced—*apropos* to grace—his favourite topic, the Pope; he drew it out as a conjuror draws out his ribbons from his throat, in strips of many-coloured thought; but all of the same material; incessant, endless, as though his inner man were Pope and all Pope; still we listened, and might have listened until morning dawned, had it not been for the audacious stranger, Tomkins of the metropolis, who having for the first twenty minutes been exclusively occupied with lobster salad, had made during that period no sign of either adhesion or dissent.

'Pooh!' cried he, suddenly thrusting away his plate, and looking straight at the great Alexandrine—'Pooh!' repeated he, puffing out his cheeks in a boastful and contemptuous manner, 'you know nothing about it, and it's all nonsense: the Popes were all apes, sir, like the rest of us.'

'The Pope, or Papa,' continued Alexandrine, disdaining to notice the interruption—'the Pope, or Papa'——

'Has an ape's tail,' observed Tomkins, with deliberation; 'whether, as among the Ghilanes of Africa, the vertebral column is externally elongated, or whether'——

'The Father of his People, the Vicegerent of Heaven, the Holy Father,' repeated our tautological friend, 'possesses, or is supposed to possess'——

'A tail,' retorted the imperturbable Tomkins, who was by this time standing up—'a tail of at least two inches long: he could express pleasure by waggling it, or melancholy by slightly depressing it; but it was shamefully cut off, in his Holiness's thirteenth year, because it interfered with him—unless he was very careful—whenever he took a seat. In a certain island in the Bay of Bengal, there still without doubt exists a nation of tailed men; and Monsieur du Couret, who was despatched by the French government into the interior of Africa'——

Alexandrine sat down in despair, resigning his position for that evening, and Tomkins preached in his stead. He, too, had his theory—that of the famous Lord Monboddo; he, too, had a capacity for social boring unexampled even in Bridgeford; he, too, had a flood of words wherein all remarks of other persons were drowned. It was curious to observe how immediately the allegiance of the rest of us was transferred to the victorious stranger, just as in a poultry-yard, if chanticleer upon his own dunghill be defeated by an alien game-cock, the submissive hen-harem turn their domestic eyes at once towards their new lord and master.

Lord Monboddo's peculiar views were indeed quite a relief after that theory about the Pope, which poor Alexandrine upon this occasion was not permitted to discuss afresh, and we felt that we had in some sort had our Intellectual Treat after all.

Of the incalculable benefit which the experience has conferred upon our Gamaliel, I need only say this, that upon the next occasion of our meeting we were permitted to have quite a little social conversation, nor did he introduce the Pope more than three times, or speak at any period at greater lengths than thirty minutes throughout the evening.

The reason for making this incident public, is to suggest to my oppressed fellow-townsmen the propriety of hiring Tomkins for a few evenings, or even of leasing him (if he will permit us to do so) for the space of twelve months, in order that he may come among us and attend in turn our numerous coteries; and thus always bringing his Tail-theory with him, he may inflict a lasting lesson upon every Gamaliel of Bridgeford.

THREE YEARS IN POLAND.

In the spring of 185–, I made an agreement with a Polish nobleman as land-steward; and having prepared a hasty *viaticum*, kissed all my little brothers and sisters, with many promises of the wonderful stories I should bring home to them, and slily slipped a ring on the white hand of my pretty cousin Kate, I started for my destination. I was just twenty-three, a time of life when most men sadly overrate their own powers, as a retrospective view often tells us; and when we are inclined to sanguine views of life, men, and manners. Hitherto, I had never been beyond the fine home counties, so that every new scene and incidental varieties of character, costume, and customs, struck me more forcibly than they would have done an experienced traveller. It is these impressions that I propose to set before the reader, added to those after-experiences I was enabled to obtain of Polish domestic life, during a three years' residence in the very heart of the country. As the individuals I mention in these sketches are now living, I shall make use of fictitious names; but upon every other statement the reader may place implicit faith as being perfectly authentic.

It was the first week in April that I arrived at Krarowie, a village belonging to my employer, the Count P——, and where I stayed a couple of days *en route* to Cracow. Here was a railway station, and here the count kept an English stud. The stud-master was an Englishman, and a good-humoured jolly fellow, but, like every one else, did nothing. His daily routine of business was to look through the stables every morning, swear a little at the groom, get his breakfast, walk to the railway station—there are always numbers of idlers at the station—about a quarter of a mile off; play at cards or dominoes and drink Bavarian beer till dinner; and drink it again from dinner till tea, and from tea till supper. No one seemed to do anything except the peasants, and even they worked lazily. The women going about in blue bodices and skirts just reaching below their knees was a sight very unusual to me, and I must confess I felt somewhat shocked at their indelicacy; but in a few weeks I got quite used to the sight, and thought no more of it than if I had lived among bare legs all my life. The men still keep to the national costume, and it is very picturesque: a red cap, square crowned, and bound with a band of black sheep's wool; a long blue coat, kept tight to the waist with a broad leather belt, ornamented by studs and rings, and with a steel and knife hanging from it; blue trousers tucked into high boots, complete the dress. They never wear neckcloths, but in coldest weather tie their shirt with a piece of pink ribbon.

I stayed three days at Count P——'s palace at W——, on my way to my final destination, which was an estate some eighty miles north of Cracow. The palace had as much right to such a title as many others in Poland, being a dull and dismal-looking building, situated in a gloomy square. You enter through an archway into the courtyard, and see an agreeable *mêlée* of a peasant's cart, two or three ladders hanging up against a wall, an empty barrel or two, and various litters of no cleanly appearance; all these forming a pleasant *tout ensemble* for the eyes and noses of the noble inhabitants when they chose to amuse themselves by promenading in the balcony which ran round the second story above.

The country from Cracow to Warsaw by the banks of the Vistula is for the most part bleak and unpicturesque. Of the scenery and Polish roads, I had a good opportunity of judging, as my conveyance was a peasant's cart, a small four-wheeled carriage, drawn by a couple of sturdy little ponies, with a pole between them. The body of the vehicle is simply a wicker-basket, and the hind-wheels are connected with the fore only by a pole, held by an iron bolt. This original construction I found was admirably adapted for the roads, for sometimes the front part would suddenly dip into a hole four or five feet deep, whilst the hinder would be high up in the air! But notwithstanding this terrific state of things, which no other vehicle in the world could have borne, we seldom got upset; and an upset was nothing to the discomfort of sticking in the mud, which is no uncommon occurrence in spring travelling.

Sometimes you travel for miles in a continent of slough or puddle, varying in depth from one foot to three, and one can well picture the misery of sticking in such a thing. We met several unfortunate people who were loaded too heavily, set fast, in apparently a hopeless state, in the mud, horses and men making vain attempts at a release. Meantime, seated on bundles of straw, the only seats our rude carriage afforded, we endeavoured, by the aid of bear-skins, pipes, and brandy, to keep out the blasts of the Thracian wind, which, in Horace, I read so much about as a school-boy. Our driver had his bundle in front, and in the sharpest weather hung his legs outside; he had a single line to guide his horses by, divided against their collars, and fastened to the two dulpins; and as they had no blinkers, they could see their master, who managed them well, by stretching out his arms at full length to the right or left when he wanted to use the whip. Later on our journey, and towards nightfall, we met with an accident. The pole of the carriage snapped, and it could not be replaced till the morning. No inn was near, and we had nothing with us but wodki; neither bread, coffee, nor tea. After a deal of searching about, however, we got some potatoes and a little piece of bacon, at a peasant's hut; and in the morning, by extraordinary good-luck, some mild beer was found, which, warmed up and mixed with an egg, we substituted for coffee. Had there been a gentleman living near, we might have fared better, as a Polish noble keeps open house, and benighted travellers are always received with hospitality. Arrived at S——, my final destination, I received a very kind welcome from Count P——'s Polish steward, in whose house I lived all the time that I was employed on the estate. He was a gentlemanly fellow, with a fine figure, and handsome features, and extremely well educated, but a great theorist and experimentalizer, which idiosyncrasy, I have reason to believe, afterwards ruined him. His wife, like most Polish ladies, was very proud, and, of course, had her lady's-maid, and carriage and five horses, with which she drove into the town; for it is considered quite essential, in order to maintain one's proper dignity, to have five horses to one's carriage, four being abreast in pairs, and a fifth in the front. She was, however, very kind to me, and I owed her many of my daily comforts. Their daughter, Mademoiselle Amutka, was quite a beauty, with dark hair and eyes, and cheeks as blooming and soft as a peach. She had been educated at a convent school, and was very accomplished, speaking French, German, and Polish, and having also some knowledge of English, in which I afterwards gave her lessons. I soon grew quite at home with the family circle, and had no want of society in S——; there were the doctor's family, the head clerk's, and some jolly old priests, at whose bachelor establishments I spent many an evening in great conviviality. The priests are never allowed to marry; and this law, as may be supposed, has the most vicious effects; but, as I always make it a rule to take people as I find them, I accepted their hospitality gratefully, and much as their domestic morality might shock me, kept my disapproval to myself. Depend on it, this is the only system with which one may journey through life with tolerable comfort and without disgust.

I found agriculture to be in a very low state in the 'granary of Europe,' as Poland was formerly styled. This state of things has been effected by a continual system of growing, through some generations, the same kinds of corn-crops—that is, rye, wheat, barley, and oats. Consequently, there has been no sufficient change of green crops, or fallow; and in many parts, on farms where formerly as much corn was stacked as was held in the crammed barns, the barns are now more than amply capacious to hold the whole. Draining is not generally practised, and the greater part of the finest land in the world is comparatively worthless for the want of it; the scanty crops being half smothered with a kind of sedge or rush, which thrives best in such sodden earth. When you recommend draining, the Polish farmers argue thus: 'How can draining pay, when it costs as much as the present value of the land?' They will not be convinced that the value of the land would be more than doubled. Blights are very frequent, which I attribute to the wet, cold, and unhealthy state of the land. Sugar-manufactories have sprung up in many places, and beet-root, necessarily in the neighbourhood of them, is highly estimated; but they do not appear to be very paying concerns; besides, they are not likely in the end to be at all advantageous to agriculture, but rather the reverse, for the crop exhausts the land, and the squeezed pulp is a very inadequate return, and a poor substitute for the root as a food for cattle. On most large farms is a wodki or white-brandy distillery, which takes up all the potatoes and spare corn. The refuse is also mixed with chaff, and given to cattle, but not to horses; those animals having the exceptional distinction of being fed with corn and root in its natural state. Land usually gets manured but once in about twelve or fifteen years, and in very few places are any marked signs of improvement visible. So much for agricultural prospects in Poland. It is a sad thing to reflect that so much rich land should be thus wasted. Of course, I did my best to effect some improvements on the estate of Count P——, but what can one man do against the obstinacy of inherent prejudice? The peasantry were stupid and headstrong; my friend, the Polish agent, was theoretical and headstrong also. One might as well have tried to force back the tide as to conquer such difficulties.

The summer passed quickly in our outdoor occupations, and when winter came, bringing snow and idleness, we had a merry time of it at S——. We had wolf-hunting in the forests, and sociable parties amongst the neighbours, parties that, for real enjoyment, perhaps vie with any others in the world. If you wish to see true mirthfulness and merry-making, go to a Polish ball; above all, to an *imenin*, or *name's-day* festivity. I went to a great many of these imenins. I will describe one of these, being the festival of Madame

D——, the wife of a physician residing in the neighbourhood. We drove in a sledge, and were so well wrapped up in our bear-skins, that the journey was by no means an unpleasant one, in spite of the sharp weather; and besides, there is something of sleepy luxuriance in sledge-travelling. You resign all the care of the horses to the driver, and only think of your own comfort, whilst the rapid sliding motion through the unearthly looking scenery impels you to a state of mental torpidity. On arriving, we entered a kind of reception-room, where a waiter was handing round coffee and a glass of elegant little cigarettes. A goodly assembly of company were sitting round in animated conversation, and not a few of the fair ladies were smoking; ay, and enjoying it too, holding the cigarettes in their dainty taper fingers, and ever and anon puffing from their celestial lips little clouds of real smoke. When most of the guests had arrived, we passed into the ball-room, which had an oaken floor, well waxed and shining. This, as may be supposed, is rather dangerous to the uninitiated, and even amongst those well versed in the slippery art, there are many *faux pas* and downfalls. Sometimes the floors are washed for such an occasion, but rarely.

The ball was opened by a Polonaise, which is little more than a promenade, our musicians being three Jews playing on violins, and then the evening's conviviality commenced. It is customary for every gentleman to engage a partner for the *mazur* for the whole evening, though not exclusively for any other dance. This national dance is the most exhilarating and delightful I have ever seen, and I should rejoice to see it, with slight modifications, introduced into our ball-rooms. The variety of the figures is almost endless. One, I well recollect, is always danced in the course of the evening. The couples form as in a country dance; then the first gentleman at the top takes his partner down the middle, and when returned to his place, drops down on one knee, when the worthy host fills him a glass of wine, and he drinks to the fair lady who is dancing round him. Each couple perform the same figure in turns. About midnight, supper is served. The viands consist of wild-boar's ham, venison, fowls, and game, if in season. Sweet cakes, jellies, dried and preserved fruits, tarts, and pies *à l'Anglaise*, are unknown. The wine generally used is Hungarian, and resembles strong sherry. Supper does not end the festivity, for dancing is kept up with great spirit until morning. The dowagers and paterfamiliases play cards in a room set aside for them; but I have often seen one of the jolly old fellows come into the ball-room, choose a partner, and snapping his fingers, go off in the mazur, telling the young men they have not half life in them. A hot breakfast is partaken of before parting, and then all, mutually pleased, betake themselves to the sledges, caring not how often they meet you again on a similar occasion.

In the sharp long winters, Poland is much infested with wolves, which are driven by hunger from the Russian forests to those of Poland, which are generally well stocked with roe-deer and hares. They most frequently hide in the wet swamps and inaccessible places of the woods, whence at eventide their dismal and fearful howlings are heard for several miles, if the weather be still. Being very wary, they are got at with great difficulty. In the extensive forests belonging to the estate on which I resided, we were never free from wolves, and a constant warfare was kept up against them. Sometimes they are caught in pitfalls, and sometimes hunted by dogs; though not very successfully, since it is difficult to get dogs of sufficient strength and courage to face them. The surest and most successful way of hunting them is when the snow is on the ground; the woodmen are on the alert in the neighbourhood, and generally discover by their tracks their whereabouts for the day. Notice is sent round to all the sportsmen, and some hundred and fifty villagers are collected at the shortest notice; everything is done in the quietest manner possible for fear of disturbing the wolves. When all are assembled at the place appointed, the head-forester starts at the head of about twenty sportsmen, takes a half-circle round one side of the spot where the animals are supposed to lie, and as he walks on through the forest—which, from many years' experience, he seems to know as well as a farmer does his fields—makes a sign at every hundred yards with his hands, when one of the sportsmen stops. Thus each in turn is placed, the forester taking his station at the further end, and all having strict injunctions to fire at nothing but wolves. The under-foresters, meanwhile, have been marshalling their squadron, armed with staves and hatchets, in an opposite direction. At last a short shrill note of a horn is heard, and all is expectation.

The sportsmen, hidden behind a pine-tree or a juniper bush, with gun cocked and held forward in readiness, now breathlessly await, with wide-open eyes and ears, the sight of their game. In some places, the woods are bare of brushwood, and the lofty pines with bare stems tower to an immense height; in others, the ground is covered with juniper-bushes and young firs, and here the quickest eye and most skilful hand are required to bring down your prize. The sport now begins.

First of all, the roe that happen to be within the area bound gracefully past. They may be heard coming for several yards, though they hardly seem to touch the ground. Next come the frightened hares scampering by; then a few foxes, which peep round warily, and may be easily shot, through their extreme caution. The wolf comes doggedly at the last; and having a very keen scent, will run parallel to the whole line of the hunters. Some half-dozen reports are heard at each end of the line, and three perhaps out of five fine wolves are brought down. The guns are generally loaded with five or six large bullets wrapped up in tow, but crack shots use the rifle and single ball. The animals are very difficult to kill, and must be hardly hit. I was, however, tolerably successful, and had many a day's sport, of which the above sketch gives but an inadequate description. A good dinner finishes up the day.

I will now proceed to relate a few of my experiences regarding the wider features of Polish domestic life. Of the Jews, I will speak first, since they form no small item of the community; for like ill weeds, no matter how roughly they may have been used or ground down, they only spring up thicker.

The Israelitish love and economy of gain is nowhere seen more characteristically than in Poland; nor is their pertinacity. In many towns, they are prohibited from dwelling within the gates; they cannot possess land, or keep hotels of any kind; and the law prohibits them from taking more than 6 per cent. Yet they lend to needy landowners at 20 per cent.; and quite monopolise the trade of the country. They are the shopkeepers, the millers, the mechanics, the merchants, and are contented to gain the smallest profits. A Jew-boy, of whom I was in the habit of buying cakes of 'the best Windsor soap,' pins, &c., told me that he began trading with borrowed money, for which he paid 20 per cent. per month! and even in this decidedly up-hill work he managed to support himself, and gradually to pay off his borrowed capital. The expense of living is certainly next to nothing; when travelling, they will go for days with only a loaf or two of black bread and some onions in a bag; their only luxury being a pipe and a glass of wodki at the inn; and they generally sleep on a bench or table as soundly as if on a feather-bed.

It is reckoned a clever and commendable thing to '*do*' a Jew, and it certainly does require no ordinary development of one's faculties. The Jews are not now, as formerly, exempt from serving in the army; but it is impossible to make good soldiers of them. They are the most craven-spirited of mortals. As an instance of their idea of bravery, I will repeat an anecdote that came under my personal observation. Talking one day with an old fellow, a Jew, who had a son in the army, he began praising his valour.

'My son is a brave soldier,' he said with infinite satisfaction. 'I went to see him the other day at the fortress of K——, and found him soldiering in style.'

'What was he at?' asked one of us slyly.

'Oh,' replied Moses, '*he was greasing the wagons and so on.*'

Another Jew, who was boasting of his son's personal courage, instanced as the maximum of his moral bravery, '*that he would run up to his neck in water.*'

Their costume used formerly to be a garment of black quite down to their heels, like a dressing-gown, girded round the waist by a sash; black inexpressibles; black stockings and slippers; and a black skull-cap on their heads; one lock of hair being worn on each side of the face, hanging down to the shoulder. The women shaved their heads at marriage, and wore false fronts of black silk. But the czar, in his loving-kindness to his faithful people, tried at least to make them look like Christians, and issued an ukase commanding them, under a heavy penalty, to doff the skull-cap, and shave their beards and curling locks; to wear buttons on their coats; to shorten them to a certain length; and to wear long trousers and boots. Some of these modifications have been generally adopted, but they always tuck their trousers into their boots, and all wear beards. I often heard of a Jew being shaved for a 'lark,' it being the greatest indignity that can be put upon them.

The peasantry appear to be making greater steps in improvement than any other part of the community. I believe within fifty years they were all serfs. Each had about fifteen or thirty acres allotted to him, for which he worked two or three days in the week; the landlord was responsible for him, and if his crops failed, or his cattle died, or he fell sick, the master had to come to his assistance. Now they are nearly all free men. The portion of land that they held was valued, and they pay rent for it; so long as they do this they cannot be displaced, nor can the proprietor touch an inch of his tenant's land. If a peasant be unthrifty, and unable to carry on his farm, he sells it to a neighbour, and on these sold-out farmers the proprietor has to depend for labourers; their wages ranging from fourpence to fifteen pence per diem. The peasant is his own architect, thatcher, &c., and makes light of building a house, or of moving, if he has bought a piece of land in a more favourable position. After the spring-sowing, he gets a few neighbours to assist him, and in a very short time has pulled down his old abode and built another on the new site. The walls are made of pine-logs, dove-tailed into each other, the interstices being filled up with moss, and the whole afterwards plastered and whitewashed. There is only a ground-floor, so that no very great architectural skill is required.

In the winter, the men are constantly employed in carting *wood-moss* from the forests, whilst the women are at home weaving their cloth and linen. At spring-tide, however, the labourers are in the fields at earliest dawn, ploughing and sowing; they work in a great hurry, as if for their lives; but after a month or so, this all subsides. Then you see women and girls weeding the corn, and the men lounging about in public-houses, or sitting at the blacksmith's shop smoking their pipes. The women, like the men, still adhere to their national costume, which consists of a white linen handkerchief for head-dress, tied in such a manner that one corner hangs behind, and this is always ornamented with flowers; they wear short-coloured skirts, and a light blue bodice in summer, but in winter, a coat somewhat similar to the men's. In bad weather, they wear boots which are well adapted for the roads; but in fine, go barefoot, carrying their shoes and stockings under their arms; and on entering a town or church, they very coolly seat themselves by the roadside, and put them on. The girls wear their hair in a long queue behind, which, when they marry, is cut off all round close to the ears. Society in all the country is in a rotten state. Throughout the length and breadth of the land stretches the plague of mistrustfulness—double-dealing—instability; and this can surely not be wondered at by the readers of Polish history. Those who have studied its characteristics will better be able to trace these national faults and national misfortunes to their proper source; and those who have had an opportunity of observing the present condition and prospects of this unhappy land will, I fear, see little that is cheering for future promise.

But the old pride still lurks beneath the tattered vestures: the prince who gains his living by a clerkship of perhaps fifty pounds a year, still wears his signet-ring, and boasts of his noble ancestors in the time of Casimir or Jagellon; and the wife of a Polish gentleman has still her lady's-maid and her carriage and five.

A HARVEST SONG.

The toil of day is ended,
The night is at her noon;
And the harvest song swells blithely up
Beneath the harvest-moon:
Then tread a quicker measure,
And chant a louder strain;
With dance and song, the days prolong
That bring the golden grain.

From out the distant mountain
Comes the voice of the cascade,
And the nearer gleam of its silver stream
Makes glad the silent glade;
Through all the shadowy forest
Is heard the fall of leaves—
And the timid hare treads stealthily
Among the nodding sheaves.

And now, on every hillside,
The purple vintage glows;
As when a deeper radiance falls
From daylight at its close:
No time is it for sadness,
Despondency, or fear,
When autumn comes in gladness,
To crown the fruitful year.

Dear is the pleasant leaf-time,
When all is soft around;
When frost-imprisoned rivulets
Are melting into sound;
And dear, too, is the season
When spring and summer meet;
When the woods are faint with odours,
And the hills are dim with heat.

But spring is but for pasture,
And summer but for show,
While autumn, like a crownèd king,
Has riches to bestow;
So he shall be the monarch
Of all the shining year,
And a crown he shall wear, and a sceptre bear,
Of fruits, and the golden ear. W. S.

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SCIENCE IN THE FAR NORTH.

A hundred and fifty miles—by railway—north of Edinburgh, after passing through a long stretch of unattractive country, with the Highland mountains looming on the left, and the German Ocean on the right, one comes—past all expectation—to an Elegant City, of seventy or eighty thousand population, a seaport of large shipping, and the seat of a university. This is Aberdeen, and it was in this remote and yet highly cultivated and civilised part of her Majesty's dominions, that British Science chose this year to hold her court. It was a bold idea on her part; but it seemed the more feasible since the Prince Consort, whom she had chosen for her temporary president, would be able to leave his adjacent deer-stalking ground at Balmoral, and give his attendance. Then the railway makes even extreme distance so much less of an obstruction than it used to be. Everything considered, it was hoped there might be a fair attendance of members, both of the district and from other parts of the empire.

We came, the day before the meeting was to commence, by a train consisting of thirty carriages, and carrying about seven hundred persons; so frightful a drag for the two engines, that we were two hours behind time, and so much transcending all the local accommodations of porters and carriages, that three-quarters of an hour elapsed before we could clear away from the station. This gave us a foresight of what were to be the statistics of the first meeting of the British Association held on the frontier of the Grampians. We found the city in a state of manifest excitement, and the streets full of people—amongst whom not a few strangers could easily be discriminated—full of wonder, no doubt, at the city proving so large and handsome, and being composed of so singular a material as pale granite. There were terrible rumours prevalent as to cost of lodgings and the general charges at hotels, but destined, as usually happens, to turn out great and needless exaggerations.

During all that evening and next day, large additional batches of people continued to pour into the town, and great was the surprise to *habitués* of the Association, when it was announced that, the numbers being fully up to the capacity of the chief place of meeting, it had become necessary to discontinue accepting new members. 'Early application to prevent disappointment' had certainly never before been among the contingencies of the Scientific Congress. And what was the number at which they had had to stop short? Not less than two thousand five hundred, being four hundred beyond what had ever before applied for tickets at the corresponding period. Bravo 'the braif citie of Aberdeen,' as the old ballad calls it.

When the opening meeting took place in the evening, in a new music-hall of large and handsome proportions, which it filled in every part, it was seen that a great success was assured. The learned of the place, the best citizens, the country gentlefolk, with their ladies, were all there in ample numbers. The platform and orchestra were planted, as usual, with the principal savans; and at the appointed time, *to a minute*, the Prince Consort was ushered in and brought to the centre of the front. There Professor Owen demitted his functions as past president, and the Prince took them up, a piece of commerce in itself delightfully significant of the assumed equality to which all ranks are brought in the world of intellect. There had been speculations beforehand as to what the Prince would do. Would he give the customary sort of annual address, reviewing the science of the past year? Would it be something else? Would it be his own composition, or somebody else's? Would he read, or have some one to read for him? Would his presidentship be a reality, or an appearance merely? An agreeable solution was given to all these doubts, when he assumed his place at the desk, took a paper which was handed to him, and began in a firm clear voice, though with a slightly foreign accent, to read a paper manifestly of his own composition, involving simply some remarks on science in general, and the duties of the British Association in connection with it. This royal presidentship, then, was to be a reality, and one of a satisfactory character. His Royal Highness gracefully took upon himself to be, from his peculiar position in this country, the representative of that large public which profits by the exertions of men of science, but is unable actively to join in them. He was further a means of shewing that their labours are not unappreciated by their sovereign, who was desirous of her subjects in general being made aware of this. He proceeded to remark that science is only distinguished from common knowledge by the determination of inquiry to particular points, from which it may eventually 'grapple with the boundlessness of creation and with the laws which govern both mind and matter.' There is danger, he said, that the great diversity of the lines of inquiry might cause a damage to the unity of science. 'It has occasionally been given to rare intellects and the highest genius to follow the various sciences in their divergent roads, and yet to preserve that point of sight from which alone their totality can be contemplated and directed.' Such individuals, however, 'remain still single individuals, with all the imperfection of human nature.' To supply this want, it appeared to him, was the special utility of such combinations of men of science as the present. It was only necessary, in such societies, that they should limit themselves to the sciences of clearly ascertainable fact—the *inductive* sciences—excluding all those which involved matters of faith and opinion, as on these men's passions and feelings were sure to be roused. After some further exposition of the functions of the British Association, the Prince adverted to it as a medium of communication between scientific men and the state. It did not always obtain the favourable hearing it desired: it might sometimes be considered as a bore. But the British are 'a free, active, enterprising, and self-determining people, where every interest works for itself, considers itself the all-important one, and makes its way in the world by its own efforts;' and such difficulties were accordingly to be expected. In time, however, Science might speak to the State, not like an importunate beggar, but 'like a favoured child to its parent;' and 'the State will recognise in Science one of its elements of strength and prosperity.' At the same time, the public will come to know that 'philosophers are not vain theorists, but essentially men of practice—not conceited pedants wrapped up in their own mysterious importance, but humble inquirers after truth, proud only of what may be achieved or won for the general use of man.' There was just sense and sound reflection in this royal address; but all felt its great charm to be in the good feeling which brought the husband of our sovereign to reciprocate deference and sympathy with her people. It is surely in such a way that royalty can best maintain its place and influence in our days; and what better proof could royalty give of an intelligence equal to its era, than the seeing that such is the case?

Next day,[*] according to custom, the eight sections of the Association commenced their week's sittings in the several class-rooms of the Marischal College, under their respective presidents—the Earl of Rosse, Dr Lyon Playfair, Sir Charles Lyell, Sir William Jardine, &c.; and the attendance on nearly all was greatly larger than usual. The Geological, being surest of a large audience, had the hall of the college assigned to it—a fine room, hung with the portraits of old professors, ancient patrons, and eminent *alumni*, and now and for once a perfect flower-bed of beauty and fashion. The sections are, in their external presentment, a curious study, nearly all having their several peculiarities. That of Mathematical and Physical Science, and that of Mechanical Science, are mostly composed of middle-aged and elderly men, calm, hard-headed, practical—seldom having a lady to decorate their sittings. In the Statistical Section you see a number of plain, slow men—sometimes a Quaker or two amongst them—men of self-denying tastes, gravely interested in prisons and reformatories, relishing arithmetical matters for their own sake, yet sometimes falling out much more amongst themselves than one would expect numerical matters to give occasion for. Geography and Ethnology generally has a large miscellaneous attendance—including a profusion of ladies; though seldom in these respects equalling Geology, which is obviously the favourite of all the sciences for the present. In the Zoological Section you meet the calm studious Owen, the lively, vividly clever Huxley, and other men of wide views and extended fame; but the staple is—clergymen—though we don't know how it is, unless the contemplativeness of the parsonage and manse have some peculiar affinity to the study of the corvidæ and coleoptera. One may find some amusement in observing the different styles of people who come forward with papers. The regular professor, accustomed to bring his speculations before societies in London, has his wall-illustrations in the nicest order, feels confident of support among his friends on the platform, knowing that his facts will be welcomed as in point; and delivering a paper just long enough not to exhaust patience, comes off with éclat. In strong contrast to him is the local or provincial observer, who, unknown and without support, ignorant of what the president will endure and the audience applaud, comes out with some laborious paper, the result, perhaps, of months of research, and is bewildered to find himself called upon to condense, to abridge, to keep himself within twenty minutes, and so on; commands which he has no sooner obeyed, to the utter nullification of all his labours, than possibly a University professor will commence a rambling speech of comment in unmusical voice, but with piquant liveliness and drollery, and be allowed to go on with irrelevant nonsense for three-quarters of an hour of that precious time which was meted in minutes to the painstaking but obscure observer.

The Association was not distinguished on this occasion by the bringing forward of any remarkable novelty either in science or its applications; but there was a great amount of good and useful work. The geology of the county was explained with admirable clearness by Professor Nicol—it is mainly granite and primitive rocks, covered with superficial deposits, of which the lowest is generally a compact clay, including multitudes of scratched boulders, the product of a glacial sea. Dr Dickie, in the Natural History Section, described the zones of vegetation in the province, shewing the somewhat remarkable fact, that it contains many farms growing oats considerably over a thousand feet above the level of the sea. There were also good local expositions from Dr Longmuir and Mr T. F. Jamieson. Some excitement took place in the Geological Section when Sir Charles Lyell, its president, gave his opinions regarding the late discoveries of human remains and works far back in the pleistocene period. He could not confirm the verity of the human bones alleged to be found under breccias of the volcanic district in Central France; but he fully accepted the numerous flint-weapons exhumed from under ancient gravels near Amiens and Abbeville. About a score of these implements was exhibited before him, and that they have been fashioned by the hand of man, it is impossible to doubt. Out of upwards of a thousand which have been found first and last, a considerable number had been excavated by geologists and antiquaries themselves; so there could be no imposture in the case. Some ancient tribe of savages had once occupied that spot, whose weapons these had been. From the great accumulation of fluviatile gravel over them, the elevation which this had subsequently undergone, and, finally, the wearing down of this into modern river-cliffs, it was evident that the period of their deposition was long antecedent to the times embraced by history and tradition. It was coeval with that of the ancient rhinoceros and primitive elephant, and many ages must have elapsed between it and the invasion of Gaul by the Romans. The impression of a startling amount of antiquity for the human race was conveyed by Sir Charles Lyell; but, in reply to challenging remarks afterwards made, it was justly pointed out by Professor Phillips, that all that geology properly does in the case is to establish the contemporaneousness of certain human works with certain deposits and certain other fossils, excluding all idea of a particular date for the fact. Sir Charles afterwards mentioned another novelty, which will be heard of with much interest, that, after all the objections that have been taken to a natural origin for species, a naturalist of the highest character, Charles Darwin, is about to bring out a laborious work, shewing that 'those powers of nature which give rise to races and to permanent varieties in animals and plants, are the same as those which, in much longer periods, produce species, and, in a still longer series of ages, give rise to differences of generic rank.'

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[*] Thursday, September 15.

The Aberdeen meeting was distinguished not merely by an extraordinary amount of attendance, but by an adjunct altogether without precedent, in the form of an antiquarian museum collected for the occasion. A spacious hall exhibited a series of cases, in which the members could see examples of those stone and flint implements just adverted to as bordering on, or involved in, geologic ages, followed by specimens of man's earliest efforts in the formation of metal utensils and weapons, as these were again by an ample suite of middle-age antiquities, of every conceivable kind, connected with the district. In very natural connection with the latter, came an abundant show of Jacobite relics—vestiges of an extinct dynasty—a large proportion of them contributed by the Perthshire family of Threipland of Fingask, of which the grandfather, great-grandfather, and great-great-grandfather of the present worthy representative were all of them actors and sufferers for the unfortunate House of Stuart. Then the walls exhibited a collection of local historical portraits not much less than that exhibited two years ago at Manchester; including many of the works of George Jameson, a pupil of Rubens, who, strange to say, produced admirable representations of the human face divine at Aberdeen before the time of the Civil War. The great House of Gordon—the family of Grant, Earl of Seafield—the Leslies, Carnegies, and other families of historic note—the great Scottish leaders of the seventeenth century—as Montrose, Dundee, Argyle, Sir Archibald Johnston—were all prominent here, gathered in from remote castles and mansions, where few had any chance of ever seeing them. There was also an abundance of Stuart portraits, extending from James III., who died in 1488, to Prince Charles Edward and Cardinal York. Of these, the most notable was a full-length Queen Mary, from the Catholic College at Blairs near Aberdeen. It represents the queen as in her latter years, with a small painting of her execution in the background, and two ladies by her side, labelled with the names of her faithful attendants, Jean Kennedy and Elizabeth Curle. The story of it is this. Painted for these two ladies as a memorial of their beloved mistress, it was presented by them to the Scots College of Douai in France, the brother of Elizabeth Curle being at the time one of the professors there. 'On the breaking out of the French Revolution, when the inmates of the college were obliged to fly, the portrait was taken out of the frame, rolled up, and concealed in the chimney of the refectory, the fireplace being built up. The late Rev. Charles Gordon, of Aberdeen, then a student of the college, assisted in concealing it. In 1814, it was taken out and transferred to the English Benedictine Convent in Paris, where it remained till it was brought to Scotland by the late Bishop Paterson, and deposited in Blairs College.' Many persons, dwelling at a distance, and unwarned of this remarkable collection, will regret having failed to attend the British Association at Aberdeen, on its account alone.

UNCLE CHUNK'S DUEL.

Mr Horatius Damocles Blibb, of Tennessee, U. S., having failed in attaching himself to the embassy of his beloved country in London, has attached himself rather permanently to *me*, who have the honour—although in the comparatively humble condition of an Englishman—of being his brother-in-law.

Had I first discovered my Angelina in her own home-garden, and accompanied by this singular plant, it is possible that I might have left her blooming alone, and hesitated to ally myself with the Blibb family; but I met the dear creature, as I was travelling 'down South,' away from her paternal halls, and married her with too little inquiry into her domestic relations. My character is intensely peaceful, and my feelings patriotic in a very high degree, but I should hail with joy a declaration of War with the United States to-morrow, with all its risks and disadvantages, if accompanied with a peremptory order for all citizens of that Republic to leave these shores. That, and the commission of Murder—for which, however, there are here not the same agreeable immunities as upon the other side of the Atlantic—are the only courses which hold out to me any hope of deliverance from my brother-in-law Blibb. He has dibbled himself comfortably into British soil, and on my own premises, and there he will remain, I know, a very perfect specimen of the *Americanus vulgaris*, until the gardener Death shall whittle him off with his clasp-knife, and there will be a happy release for somebody. I despise the man who cannot be happy in any room that is not furnished with a spittoon, but I hate the individual, whose wishes in the above respect having been complied, yet takes no advantage of that circumstance. Violence, however—the form of remonstrance which every possessor of a polished drawing-room grate would prefer—is out of the question with a fellow who goes about with a 'toothpick' made of steel, and fourteen inches long, in his pocket; and argument is impossible with a gentleman who has had an infallible uncle.

'Uncle Chunk did it, he did,' remarks Horatius Damocles, when expostulated with upon any matter whatever; 'and I guess *he* knew.'

Brother Blibb's conversational tone is always nasal; but when speaking of his great departed relative, his voice becomes more like that of the peripatetic *Punch* than of articulate-speaking Man, and so much so, indeed, as absolutely to rasp the ears of the listener. I pity from my heart my travelled visitors when I hear the first dreadful interrogatory addressed to them (through half a nostril) by my brother Blibb, of, 'When you were travelling in the U-nited States, stranger, I calkilate you must have met with *my* Uncle Chunk: you must have heard the kurnel, sir; and having heard, have sympathised?'

It has unfortunately happened that the great majority of my acquaintances who have crossed the Atlantic, and beheld with dazzled eyes the glory of the great Republic, have not enjoyed the privilege of listening to Mr Blibb's uncle's conversation, and they are sometimes bold enough to say so.

'You air to be pitied, sir,' then responds the nephew; 'to have heard my uncle was to have been elevated above your fellows; he was the most remarkable man, perhaps, in our most remarkable country. You must have at least heard *of* the kurnel?'

Sometimes the persons thus addressed have had the further temerity to confess, that during the whole of their foreign travel they have not even had the advantage of hearing mention of Mr Chunk's name; in which case Damocles observes: 'Then, stranger, you must, I guess, have stuffed *your* wool in pretty tight.'

Once only was the reply in the affirmative, and even then it was not received by Mr Blibb with favour. One very polite and conciliating visitor thought he *had* seen the celebrated Colonel Chunk, and personally conversed with him upon various entertaining subjects.

'And when might that have been?' asked my brother-in-law Blibb, incredulously.

'Well, I think I must have had the pleasure of meeting Colonel Chunk during the summer before last.'

'I expect that wasn't *my* uncle, stranger,' responded the implacable Blibb; '*my* uncle Chunk was wiped out ten years ago, he was.'

It was owing to my conciliatory friend's expressing a polite interest in the somewhat remote decease of that gentleman, that I am able to supply, from his nephew's lips, the actual circumstances of the 'wiping out' in question.

I will endeavour to avoid, as much as possible, the peculiar phraseology and sentiments of the transatlantic narrator; but as the twang of the voice in which he spoke still lingers in my ears, in spite of myself, it is possible that I may not be able to get rid of some of the expressions native to the biography.

Uncle Chunk, then, a man of some talent and infinite impudence, was remarkable even in his own country as an accomplished Ripper or Whipper. He had chawed off—I mean he had shot with his own hand, during his thirty years of manhood, and between the epochs of 18 and 48, no less than seven head of American citizens besides niggers—the 'wiping out' of whom, according to my brother Damocles, is to be considered no more of an achievement than of a crime. His commercial transactions, which were of the most varied nature, ranging from pigs to pig-iron, had been interspersed more than once with bankruptcies, which British prejudice would perhaps have designated as fraudulent; but in the end his characteristic 'spryness' or sagacity triumphed, and Uncle Chunk had realised considerably. In his latter years, therefore, eschewing the base pursuit of the almighty dollar, he gave up his leisure energies to politics, and their transatlantic consequences—the Duello, with revolvers. He was, it seems, a Whig of the old school, although, I should think, not altogether answering to Lord John Russell's conception of that character; and whenever he came across anybody of the new school, or indeed of any other school whatever, argument was always followed—in the rare cases when it was not preceded—by bullets.

He seldom settled a difficulty in any other manner, although he did carry about with him, in deference to universal custom, both a bowie-knife and a bludgeon; and the consequence naturally was, that his ideas were listened to with respect, and contradicted with caution. In his celebrated encounter with the famous Septimus Whet of Massachusetts, when that gentleman's pistol so unfortunately missed fire, Mr Chunk's demeanour, as he walked right up to him and deliberately shot him down, was considered by the spectators to be in its dignity and firmness little short of Roman. He felt, as he afterwards confided to his nephew, that he had an obvious, however painful, duty to fulfil; and he executed it, as he flattered himself, in a manner that the ancient Cato, of European celebrity, might possibly have come up to, but could scarcely have surpassed. It is possible that Mr Chunk, who immediately after this achievement bestowed upon himself the title of Colonel, might in course of time have shot himself into Congress, or even into the presidential chair itself; but his favoured country is prolific in men of this kind of genius, and there happened to be many other persons taking similar means of improving their social status at the same period.

Antoninus Pius Rix, a contemporary of my brother-in-law Blibb, and therefore much the colonel's junior, though young in years, was imbued with all the virtues which flourished in his native state of Illinois:

Its philosophic care
Had formed *him* for these virtues true,
By precept and example too,

and he could not brook to hear the champion of distant Tennessee so universally 'cracked up.' Accompanied, therefore, by a sympathising band of brothers, he entered the colonel's country with the avowed intention of 'whipping' that formidable individual, who, on his part, hailed the opportunity thus afforded to him of reaping another laurel.

The meeting of these two heroes, especially adapted as it must have been to the national palate, has not, as far as I know, been yet portrayed by any transatlantic pencil, but I have my brother Damocles's word for it that it might form a subject for the greatest limner. The middle-aged hero gazed upon his youthful opponent with calm contempt, not unrelieved by the interest which always attaches to a person, however indifferent to us, who, we are tolerably certain, will not be alive within the next four-and-twenty hours; while the young man regarded the colonel in the light of some diligent individual who had been all his life amassing reputation for his (Antoninus Pius's) benefit; the great advantage of this sort of Fame being that it is transferable, and that one who has a mind to be eminent may achieve it at any time by picking a quarrel with the veriest 'whipper' in creation, and whipping *him*. In the case of Uncle Chunk, to be sure, there was considerable risk; and it is said that the young man would have 'made tracks' at the last moment, and shunned the contest, had it not been for his sympathising friends from Illinois, who had laid a good many dollars on the matter at favourable odds.

The colonel's prompt inquiry as to whether the young gentleman 'wanted whipping,' was held to be equivalent to a challenge, and therefore Antoninus Pius had the choice of the mode of combat as well as of weapons. This weighty question was settled by a committee of his backers, after a debate of fourteen hours, wherein Mr Rix himself was not permitted to take part; and the conclusion they arrived at was the following: The combat was to be conducted, as usual, with revolver and bowie, but with this singular addition—or rather subtraction—that the antagonists were to have no clothes on whatsoever, and were to fight in the dark. The former proviso was not dictated by humanity, with any view of making a gunshot wound less dangerous, but because it was understood that the accomplished colonel had on one occasion, other weapons failing, Thugged a gentleman with his own neckerchief. The latter clause was insisted upon, as tending to equalise the parties, by diminishing Uncle Chunk's advantage of experience in the duello; for, singular as it may seem, the gallant colonel had never before 'wiped out' any gentleman except amid the applause of his fellow-countrymen, and in the open day.

The sensation produced throughout the locality when the astonishing conditions of this encounter began to be known, was very considerable; the little town in which Uncle Chunk resided was filled to overflow, and the most fabulous prices were paid for standing-room in the passage next to the apartment wherein this tournament *à l'outrance* was to be held. This was a long low room at the top of the inn, made perfectly bare of furniture, and with every ray of possible moonlight—for it was arranged that the duel should be fought at night, to insure complete darkness—carefully excluded by close-fitting shutters. At the appointed hour, these two champions of their respective states were turned into their dreadful arena in the very natural costume that had been agreed upon, and each furnished with the implements for 'whipping'—a revolver with two barrels, and a bowie-knife, held fast, for want of a belt, in either hand. Those ingenious products of civilisation were, in fact, all that physically distinguished those highly cultivated Christian gentlemen from their forefathers of some four thousand years ago, however great may have been their intellectual and moral superiority.

Notwithstanding the confidence engendered in my bosom by a pretty long familiarity with my brother-in-law Blibb's veracity—which was, indeed, almost as unquestioned as that of his departed relative—I began to think that the narration was here getting a little *too* improbable. I therefore ventured to indulge at this precise point of the biography in a long and low, but not an unmelodious whistle. 'You calkilate it 's gitting too tall?' observed Horatius Damocles.

I nodded. My conciliatory friend was hastening to assure the historian that *he* saw nothing uncommon, and far less unlikely, in the circumstances, when Mr Blibb produced from his breast-pocket an execrably printed Tennessee paper, of some ten years back, and put it into my hands. Therein did certainly appear the above account in full, just as it had been described to us, except that the narration was invested with much extraneous grandeur in the reflections which it called forth from the sympathising and admiring editor.

'I guess you 'll credit *that*,' said my brother-in-law, sulkily; 'you may jest go slick on there from where I stopped.' And I accordingly read as follows:

'Like a glorious denizen of the primeval forest, who resents with noble scorn the false restraints of artificial existence, the patriotic child of Tennessee'—'That's Uncle Chunk,' observed my brother Blibb, in a parenthesis—'stepped forth into that darkened chamber, with the radiant air of one who is about to whittle his antagonist to chips; and not less boldly did the younger hero, fresh from the low green hills of Illinois, break from the affectionate hand-grips of his sympathisers in the passage, and cross the threshold of that apartment which was to be a Temple of Victory, but might, for all he knew, have been a Hall of Doom. The two were to be shut up together thirty-five minutes, at the expiration of which the doors were to be thrown open. During the first five minutes, no blow was to be given or shot exchanged, it being the interval allowed for allocating themselves. A knock from the outside was to be the signal for the combat to commence, as soon as opportunity offered.

'Never shall we forget, as we stood with beating heart and note-book in hand in that same passage—where twenty dollars was not considered too high a figure for standing-room, and the rent of which valuable location was to be divided equally between Silas Fixings, the landlord, and the fortunate survivor of the encounter—never shall we forget, we repeat, the anxious waiting for that knock. Just before it should have come, Epaminondas Rufus Tilt, who was next-hand to me, called out that the partition was but one board thick, and if a bullet did come wide, that we should get it; and so we had the passage cleared for the time, till Silas, who would not knock till it was full again, let others up, and realised twice over. At last the signal was given, and followed by total silence, except that now and then we heard a sliding against the wall, which was produced by those two heroes moving about like serpents in the darkness. The betting was at starting, two, and even three to one upon the colonel; but when they found the young man so spry and careful, it declined; Rix did not want for friends, indeed, at any time, and the Illinois party must, as it turned out, have made a heap of dollars. Presently we heard a revolver crack twice, and then the colonel a laughing. At this period, the odds rose to ten to one, and there were no lack of takers either. After a little, there was another shot, and young Rix shouted out that we might come in when we liked, for that the colonel was wiped out. Of course we waited till the time was up, but there was no more betting; and when the door was opened, we found it all up with Chunk, and Antoninus Pius sitting on the bare floor with his arms folded, and calling for his clothes. We have been favoured by the latter gentleman, for the exclusive use of this newspaper, with a detailed account of the proceedings (at two dollars *per* line), which will be published in our second edition. At present, we merely cull this interesting statement, that his worst time, out and out, was during the protracted interval before the signal to begin was given.

'Rix had edged right away to the other end of the room, so as to put the colonel as far away as possible, and in order that he might hear him coming: his annoyance may therefore be imagined, when, after the first few minutes, he found (by his breathing) that the wary Chunk *had adopted precisely the same dodge as himself*, and was just as close to him as at starting.'

'The paper does not say, then, how your poor uncle met his fate, after all?' observed my conciliatory friend.

'No; that all came out in the next edition, when Antoninus Pius had got clean away; and it riled us Tennesseers pretty smart, it did. The young fellow got a friend—'twas Epaminondas Tilt himself, I reckon—to hold a string which was attached to a brick in the chimney of the room. After a little, Tilt gave this string a jerk, and the brick in the chimney sounded to poor Uncle Chunk as though Antoninus Pius was making tracks that way; so he fires right up twice, and bursts out a larfing. Then, thinking he had quite done the trick, he took no more pains with himself; and Rix, who would have larfed in his sleeve enough, I guess, if he had had a sleeve, soon found his opportunity, and made an end of the colonel at first shot. It was a remarkable device sure*ly*,' concluded my brother Blibb. 'Antoninus Pius was afterwards thought greatly of, in consequence; and if Uncle Chunk had lived, it would have earned his best admiration, so it would; but as it was, you see, he got wiped out.'

SIDE BY SIDE WITH WATERLOO.

Amongst the earliest reminiscences of the writer of this paper are perplexing conversational allusions, by elderly persons, to 'war-time' and 'war-prices,' which had the singular effect of filling his mind with the distracting idea that nothing on earth took place during the 365 days and nights constituting Anno Domini 1815, except the one annihilating and decisive victory known as the Battle of Waterloo. Subsequent inquiries have of course dispelled this youthful notion; and the other day a reference by this writer to the daily papers of 1815 having been necessary, it became quite as confusing to him to discover that, in comparison with the prominence of position and quantity of space allotted to other things, the battle of Waterloo hardly took place at all. Some hours having elapsed before said writer could withdraw himself from the refreshing view thus opened to him, it occurred to him that it would be interesting to prepare a *réchauffé* of his entertainment—first, because newspapers may be considered as photographing events while they are passing, thereby stamping many a little detail that must necessarily be omitted in the broader painting of future histories, that may yet be curious and important in its way; and also because it is always useful and salutary to compare the opinions, manners, and customs of our predecessors with those in vogue at the present day.

Routs, balls, masquerades, entertainments, fêtes, card-parties, divertissements, assemblies, *déjeûnés*, dinner-parties, supper-parties, music-parties, and *conversazioni*, kept the fashionable world—the only world then considered worth mentioning—in a constant round of gaiety; and the recital of these festivities was thought so important that the public were even kept scrupulously informed whether Lady A. or the Countess B. provided her guests with a *sandwich* supper, or whether she regaled them with more satisfactory comestibles; and this, too, when the *Times* itself covered only half a sheet of paper.

The manner in which these amusements were conducted was a startling contrast to the perfectly dignified and solemn plan of our soirées and receptions now-a-days; for when the Honourable Mrs So-and-so saw masks at her hospitable mansion in Sucha Street, we read of her visitors disporting themselves in costumes which remind us only of our May-day revellers, and which would certainly insure those worn-out bacchanalians a considerable allowance of the gibes and jeers of the neighbouring population. Thus, we find ladies appearing as Jew pedlers, blue-coat schoolboys, special pleaders, judges, fishwomen, Johanna Southcote, Denis Balgruddery, &c.; and of three sisters, at one of these entertainments, the eldest chose to appear as Major Sturgeon; the second, as a sailor fiddling; and the third, as a woman bearing evident marks of her husband's chastisement, on account of her constant application to a gin-bottle which she carried under her apron! These characters were not merely dressed, they were actually performed; and the amount of energy and spirit displayed by the fair personators was eulogised before the world. Small wonder that so many people in 'the good old times' should have condemned the different amusements then in fashion; the wonder is that this prejudice should cling to their descendants, who cannot see—well-intentioned but mistaken people that they are—that reform has crept in here as in everything else; and that the sooner they admit that the world has improved, the better it will speak for their own powers of discrimination.

If ladies enjoyed themselves as we have described, we may imagine that gentlemen were at least equally diverting; and accordingly, we read of bevies of wagoners, coachmen, undertakers accompanied by mutes, footmen, countrymen, and Jews; besides numerous housemaids, milliners, old women, witches, gipsies, &c., all represented by the young 'bloods' of the day, to keep in countenance, we may presume, those lively ladies who chose to exhibit themselves in male attire. Harlequins, pantaloons, and clowns, were very favourite characters; and one noble lord appeared in Grimaldi's dress in *Mother Goose*. Sometimes, but only rarely, this witless selection from the grotesque would be abandoned, and there would be a feeble attempt to ridicule the topics of the day; when, for example, we find one infatuated individual indulged in the dreary joke of dressing as an old man holding a ripe melon in his hand; intending to convey a brilliant satire on the marriage of Miss Mellon and Mr Coutts, which had taken place a few days before.

Hard work must the dancing-parties have been; for it must be remembered that the quadrille of the present day was nearly unknown, and that the waltz had only lately been introduced, and was still considered by many as a kind of foreign abomination; the fashionable world was therefore condemned to the fatiguing performance of Scotch reels and country-dances—the latter having been always the medium for opening the balls. Recollecting also that the general costume for ladies at that time, included, among other horrors, towering head-dresses of ostrich feathers, and the Turkish turbans; the ponderous necklaces, bracelets, and earrings of pearls, diamonds, or polished pebbles, according to the wealth of the wearer; and the stiff white kid gloves drawn right over the elbows, we can hardly imagine a single feature of these balls to have resembled those of the present day. The music to which these heavily laden women twisted and twirled was such as is now heard only in the country tavern, with the invariable accompaniments of beer and tobacco, and consisted of such tunes as *The Triumph*, *Tullochgorum*, and *Drops of Brandy*, requiring small skill in the musicians, and less taste in the audience. It is well known that the royal dukes mingled freely with the other guests at these entertainments; but it seems difficult to picture George, Prince Regent, and the Honourable Miss Prettyface, threading in and out a long line of belles and beaux to the enlivening strains of *The White Cockade!*

The theatre also received its full share of editorial attention, and certainly there never was, perhaps, a period when it was more attractive. Although Mrs Siddons and Mrs Jordan had avowedly left the stage, they still occasionally appeared; and among the regular performers are to be found the names of Miss O'Neill, Miss Foote, Miss Stephens, Miss Kelly, Mrs Glover; Edmund Kean, Elliston, Kemble, Bannister, Young, Incledon, Grimaldi, Mathews, and Liston. We read, too, of the first appearance in London of the late Mr Harley, and also of the début of Madame Vestris, which took place at the King's Theatre, in Winter's opera of *Il Ratto di Proserpina*, when she took the contralto part of Proserpina. Another star, too, had nearly risen, for we find it was rumoured in the green-room that Mr Fawcett had set out for Bath to inquire into the merits of a young actor there, who was creating considerable sensation, and whose name was then written M'Ready. The gossip of the green-room generally was well whispered abroad; and among other things, it disclosed with superlative elegance of expression that Miss O'Neill had refused all nuptial solicitations.

We have a charming little picture presented to us in the account of the first visit to Covent Garden Theatre of the beloved and lamented Princess Charlotte of Wales. We need lose none of the interesting detail, for it is duly chronicled—and this time we would not curtail a single paragraph—that her royal highness was dressed in a pea-green silk slip, trimmed with gold-lace, and a white muslin body, with long full sleeves; that her waist was bound by a girdle of green, clasped with diamonds; that her head-dress was a coronet of red roses, at the pinnacle of which was a *fleur de lis*; and that immediately on her appearing in the front of the box, she was hailed with enthusiastic shouts of love and loyalty. It is pleasant to imagine this amiable young princess, then in her nineteenth year, bowing—as we are told she did—most graciously to the vehement audience, whilst the orchestra played *God save the King*; and we like to read that she was affected to tears at Miss O'Neill's Belvidera, and much amused at the after-piece, *The Fortune of War*, in which Mathews and Liston sustained the principal characters.

A very different scene at another theatre is worth preserving, as it illustrates strikingly the spirit of levity that pervaded society even at the very moment when the mighty struggle for liberty—the extent of which we cannot overrate—was calling forth the aspirations and rousing the energies of many a noble soul. An officer of the 10th Hussars, occupying a box at the Brighton theatre in company with some friends, leaped from his seat on to the stage, and crossing in front of the curtain, scaled the prince-regent's box, which was of course empty, and ensconced himself therein, beckoning to his companions to follow his spirited example. This kind of impertinence leads us to ponder well before deciding which assumes the most obnoxious form—the boisterous vigour of this youth of forty-four years ago, or the enfeebled condition affected by those of the present day.

The unfortunate mother of the Princess Charlotte is residing at Naples. She gave a ball to King Joachim Murat not many weeks before his execution; and we are told that her palace was thrown open to English and Neapolitan nobility every Monday and Friday. Some time after, we read of her and her household adopting the Spanish costume; and then, when the continent was all in arms again, we find her travelling in France and Switzerland. We meet also with her fellow-victim, Mrs Fitzherbert, who is described as exciting the curiosity of the gay Parisians; and after her flight from Paris on the return of Napoleon from Elba, we read of her in the salons of our own nobility in London.

Queen Charlotte is brought before us writing to her brother, the Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, approving of the marriage of his daughter to her son, the Duke of Cumberland; and at the same time we find her majesty sending some tea and cheeses to her royal brother, in partaking of which she hopes he will be reminded of his affectionate relatives in England. It is very touching to find some simple little trait like this at a time of so much confusion; and it comes as additional proof how all mankind are moved by the same impulses, whether accident has placed us in a cottage or on a throne. All this time the poor old king was languishing in his splendid captivity at Windsor; and monthly bulletins were being issued, by three physicians, who successively remained in constant attendance, stating that his majesty's health was very good, but that his disorder was still unabated!

We meet with the names of many of that cluster of bright stars that flourished at the commencement of the present century, and who are passing away from us so rapidly; and it is, perhaps, the most interesting to read of them performing the various little duties of social life, and quietly filling their several posts in the operations of the great world. We read of Coleridge at Calne taking his part in condemning the Corn Law Bill, which caused such terrible riots, and the speech he made was, we are told, replete with argument and persuasive eloquence. We find Sheridan where we might expect to find him—at a dinner in honour of St Patrick, the Duke of Kent in the chair. Walter Scott is heard of at the Royal Academy dinner at Somerset House, and we read of his presentation to the queen. We also come across the advertisements of *The Lord of the Isles* and of *Guy Mannering*. We read of the marriage of Lord Byron and Miss Milbanke, and of whither the happy pair went to spend the honeymoon; of Lady Byron being presented at court, with a long description of the dress she wore; and of her and her husband being present at different parties, balls, and theatres in London. We see the report of Lord Byron being elected a member of the Drury Lane Theatre Committee; his lordship's literary labours being represented by the *Hebrew Melodies*, which were published at the end of this year, a few days before the birth of his little Ada. We read of the death of his infant god-daughter, Olivia Byron Moore, and about the same time of the publication of her sorrowing father's *Twopenny Post-bag*.

The remains of Robert Burns were at this time, it seems, removed to the vault of St Michael's, Dumfries. Thomas Lawrence was knighted at a levee; and his full-length portrait of the Prince Regent, with which we are all now so familiar, was exhibited for the first time at the Royal Academy. Rowland Hill was at a meeting about the property tax, and characteristically enough, his voice was the only dissentient. Mrs Piozzi arrived at Blake's Hotel; and in reference to her once loved Fanny Burney, who was experiencing all the horrors of war at Brussels itself, it is said that our readers will be pleased to hear that one of our most distinguished novelists is about to produce the first volume of her new *Tales of Fancy*. Madame de Genlis's *Henri le Grand*, suppressed by Napoleon, was published by Colburn; Madame de Stäel, from her retirement in Switzerland, gave her *Rousseau* to the world; Joanna Baillie's tragedy, *The Family Legend*, was produced at Drury Lane Theatre, with which Lord Byron's often avowed admiration of her poetry had doubtless something to do; Miss Austen's *Emma* and Miss Edgeworth's *Patronage* first appeared; and new works were advertised by Mrs Opie, Jane Porter, Lady Morgan, Wordsworth, Southey, Leigh Hunt, Keats, and Campbell. We may mention here the death of Lady Hamilton, which took place at Calais, that once-courted lady having lived a life of great penury for some time. Her memoirs were published shortly after.

Of Napoleon Bonaparte and the Duke of Wellington themselves, the great stars of this remarkable year, and also of the different circumstances attending the great events in which they were concerned, we have many little memoranda equally lifelike and instructive.

It is impossible to avoid being struck with the torpor with which the first intelligence of Bonaparte's landing in France was received. The report of his departure from Elba reached London on the 11th of March; but such an unexpected event was considered impossible, and it was treated as a mere rumour. After a few days, when it became verified that Napoleon was actually effecting that wonderful march towards Paris, which is of itself one of the finest poems in history, the public indignation was at last excited, and the epithets of Brigand, Tyrant, Invader, Monster, Miscreant, Sanguinary Corsican, Ruffian, Vulture feeding on the blood of France, Wretch, *Tygor*, and Usurper, were hurled at him thick and fast. We read of small boats crossing from the French coast with intelligence causing great dismay; and all the world is glad when the safe arrival on our shores is announced of the poor Duchesse d'Angoulême, the Duchesse d'Orleans, the Princesse Talleyrand, Madame Marmont, and many others. Much interest surrounded, too, the Duchess of Wellington, who left Paris on the 22d of March, bringing with her the crown jewels of France, and among them the celebrated diamond Napoleon had formerly worn in the hilt of his sword. The same demand on private sources for horses that occurred three months afterwards at Brussels, created such a scarcity in Paris, that Lord Exeter had to pay five hundred louis to be conveyed to the coast; and the difficulties attending crossing the Channel were so great, that another gentleman was obliged to give twenty-five Napoleons for being brought from Boulogne to Dover. In the midst of these flights and terrors, it is curious to read of Bonaparte, on his arrival at Paris, driving about, having his brothers to dinner, ordering public works to be recommenced, and being present at private theatricals as calmly as if the throne he was striving to remount were not tottering beneath him.

Of the Duke of Wellington at this period we learn that he seldom entered into society, and it was observed, when he did break through this rule, that he seemed to prefer the company of Prussians. Probably, our English general, who had positive and actual work to do, the importance of which none could understand so well as himself, was not much regretted when he left Vienna for Brussels, where he arrived on the 5th of April, having taken six days to perform the journey. From Brussels he made visits of survey to the different places near at hand, in one of which, Ghent, he dined with Louis XVIII.

At last, after Waterloo had been fought, and

Napoleon had taken flight, we read of the portable wooden observatory, 38 feet high, on which he stood during the bloody conflict; and from the letter of a gentleman who visited the field of battle in the middle of July, we obtain, indeed, a ghastly picture of the realities of war. This gentleman saw the fields and roads strewn with broken guns and hacked helmets; he saw incalculable swarms of carrion-flies preying on the bodies of dead horses; he saw the ground cracking into fissures, and displaying frightfully the corpses underneath, which had not been covered with more than a foot of earth; he saw the dead being dragged along by fish-hooks to more distant places of interment; he saw the wells and streams all crimson with the blood of countless victims; and he learned that, as so many bodies still unburied lay festering in the scorching sun, hundreds of them—men and horses together—were to be collected into heaps, and burnt to ashes. He turned from this revolting spectacle, and proceeded to the hospitals, on the way to which he passed wagons full of wounded soldiers, being removed from road-side cottages, bleeding, groaning, fevered, and athirst. When he reached the buildings, he witnessed more sights of the same heartrending kind, the one sweetening drop in the deep cup of misery being the presence of many blessed women, carefully and lovingly binding up the wounds, and soothing the agony of the poor maimed creatures.

Many English ladies fled from a life of gaiety and pleasure to nurse their wounded husbands abroad, and among them the Countess of Uxbridge; and it is with warming hearts we read how the earl, being strong enough after his amputation to bear removal, arrived in London, lying on a couch in his travelling-carriage, his devoted wife seated by his side; and how the people, recognising them directly, took the horses from the harness, and dragged the vehicle along in triumph.

Trophies of the victory soon began to reach the metropolis, and an exhibition of different articles belonging to Napoleon took place. We read of his carriage being sent over, by the Prussian officer who captured it, as a present to the prince-regent, and the contents of a *nécessaire* found therein are zealously revealed. It does, indeed, seem mere wanton extravagance to find among campaign luggage such articles as gilt bottles for Eau-de-Cologne and other perfumes, a looking-glass in a frame of matted gold, and silver boxes for almond powder and *Windsor* soap. There were several books also in the carriage, and the collection comprised, besides others, a Bible, Homer, Bossuet, the *Conspiracy of Rienzi*, La Fontaine's *Tales*, *Gil Blas*, and *Le Malheur et la Pitié*. This last is a poem by Delille, in commemoration of the sufferings of the thirty-eight girls of Verdun who were, during the Revolution, executed for sending flowers and sweetmeats to the king of Prussia. In reference to the fate of these poor things, it may be observed here, that as two of them were under the age prescribed by law, they could not be put to death; so their punishment was rescinded to imprisonment for twenty years, together with some ignominious usage; and their liberation occurring a few months after, owing to the termination of the Revolution, one of them wrote to Frederick William, who, in remembrance of the cause of her sufferings, presented her with a gold sweetmeat box set with jewels.

Paris was rapidly becoming the rendezvous for the *élite* of Europe; and we hear, on the birthday of Louis XVIII., that the Emperors of Austria and Russia, the King of Prussia, his sons and nephews, the Grand Duchess of Russia, the Prince of Würtemberg, the Prince Frederick of Orange, and the Prince of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, proceeded on horseback to the Tuileries, for the purpose of presenting their congratulations. The soldiers of the allied armies occupied Paris everywhere, and reviews of the troops by the respective generals took place frequently.

The Duke of Wellington was quietly receiving the honours that were his due; among others, the graceful compliment of being invited, at a grand dinner given by the king of Prussia, to fasten the new standards for some Prussian regiments with nails of gold—all the royal and other guests giving precedence to him. At a *déjeûné* in the suburbs of London, the Duke of Sussex sang a duet with Signor Naldi, laudatory of his exploits; and a humble tribute to his ability by an admiring manufacturer was offered by the introduction of a new door-knocker, with which we have now long become familiar—the design being the hand of the victorious warrior holding a marshal's baton, and grasping his well-earned wreath of laurels. As a bit of personal gossip, we are told that, in full dress, the duke's breast was covered with crosses and medals, and that he walked about Paris with five cockades on his hat, one above the other!

One great result attending the downfall of Bonaparte was the restitution of the different works of art to the countries whence they had been brought; and a correspondent in Paris describes a group of Italian artisans at the Louvre surrounding the sculptor Canova, who was to be seen flourishing about among bricks and mortar, eagerly directing the packing of the matchless Laocoon, for transmission to the Eternal City. We read, too, of the delight of Flemish artists at welcoming back to their galleries at Brussels the pictures they had seen with wistful eyes in Josephine's palace at Malmaison; and it is pretty to find that these long-absent treasures arrived in wagons profusely decorated with ribbons, which were unloaded in the market-place amidst cheers and shouts of exultation.

Still reading of the fine arts, we find that the portrait of Ney was withdrawn from the Hall of Marshals in the Tuileries; and this brings us to his celebrated trial, when the Berryers, father and son, defended him in a speech denounced at the time as an impudent farrago entitled the justification of Ney. The morning following the marshal's execution, Madame Ney, ignorant of her bereavement, applied at the palace for an interview with Louis, in order to solicit mercy for her husband; and it fell to the lot of the officer in attendance to acquaint her that she came too late.

Murat, stigmatised as a wretched and frantic knave, was also executed this year. Whilst he was still at liberty, he and his wife travelled under the titles of Count and Countess Lupano, and assumed the condition of private citizens; and this, we are told, they might easily contrive to do, by calling to mind the remembrance of how they conducted themselves before one was raised to the throne from the saddle, and the other from the stews.

We obtain also a glimpse of the indignation excited at Rome by the arrival there of Cardinal Fesch and Madame Bonaparte in a berlin with four horses, unwilling even then to give up their acquired dignity, although the author of it was on his voyage to St Helena, a prey, as we are told, to sea-sickness, like any other mortal.

During this time, vast preparations were being made in England to attend to the comforts of the fallen emperor; and 400 men were hard at work for six weeks in order that he should be settled in his new abode with as little delay as possible. Chairs and tables of British oak, inlaid with brass; cushions and curtains of pale-blue silk, embroidered with wreaths of black flowers; a breakfast-service of Wedgwood's delicate composition, ornamented with a white cameo device modelled by Flaxman; a dinner-service of white and gold china, with painted centres of English landscapes; cut glass and table-linen of the finest quality; and a private wardrobe to suit his well-known preference for dark green, were all packed up and sent to Plymouth, where a transport was in readiness to receive them.

Surely such kind consideration argued magnanimity on the part of Bonaparte's captors, especially when we consider that public opinion generally was so much against him, that the following quotation is a fair example how it was expressed: 'Bonaparte is indisputedly and beyond comparison the wickedest fiend that was ever suffered to prey upon and insult the feelings of his species. He is disfigured by every vice that renders human nature odious, and destitute of every virtue that renders it estimable. The atrocious means by which he acquired his power are pursued with equal zeal for its perpetuation. The misery of mankind is the bloody idol to which he offers up with blasphemous devotion a perpetual sacrifice. Nothing can satiate the diseased voracity of his brutal lusts. The enlargement of his empire only furnishes him with a wider scope for acts of barbarous injustice. The revels in which his soul delights are the multiplied forms of human woe, and the sardonic smile which his countenance occasionally betrays, is produced by the internal workings of his savage exultation.' Surely a worse character could not have been written of the Rajah of Candia, whose throne and sceptre were sent this year to the prince-regent, and who, we are asked to believe, made a woman, whose husband and family he had killed, beat the brains of her own children in a pestle and mortar!

Duels were still much in vogue. We hear of a meeting taking place behind Holland House, and others at Chalk Farm; also of a duel between two English officers at Paris, which was considered rather out of rule, as the quarrel had taken place some years before.

We find that in this year Westminster Bridge was lighted with gas for the first time, and made a splendid and brilliant appearance. Temple Bar assumed similar attractions a week or two after; but it was some months before the Strand itself relinquished the feeble oil-lamps of the good old times. This new mode of lighting was still, however, so much in its infancy, that such parts of the city as were rejoicing in its cheerful blaze, were one night suddenly enveloped in Egyptian darkness, owing to an impetuous rush of water into the meter; and it was necessary for a public-spirited individual to suggest, through the press, that the coverlids of the lamps should be made of glass, rimmed with tin, which would, he said, materially increase the beauty of the city. Lord Byron tells us, too, in one of his letters, that a stormy discussion arose at one of the meetings he attended at Drury Lane Theatre, about the expediency or inexpediency of lighting the theatre with gas; and we read that Covent Garden Theatre did assume this necessary illumination towards the end of the year. No wonder our modern extravaganzas and spectacles are the invention of the last few years. Who can imagine fairy-land and tinsel seen by the unsatisfactory flicker of guttering tallow, or by the melancholy light of badly smelling oil?

We are reminded of the shaven faces of our immediate predecessors by the fact of a French courier who arrived in London causing a great sensation because he wore moustaches, and further, had a rough and military appearance. This makes us recollect, too, that, some twenty years before, when Mrs Thrale was travelling in France, she was much struck by the French soldiers having whiskers.

Another singular instance of varying customs is shewn in the account of a bellman having been sent round by a butcher to announce that he would sell legs of mutton at sixpence-halfpenny per pound; a proceeding which obtained for his employer the sobriquet of the Patriotic Butcher, as the poor in London had been suffering great privations owing to the very high price of all kinds of provisions.

We read that at the execution of a criminal at Newgate, he extorted a promise that his hands should not be touched after death by persons who came to be rubbed for the wen—a custom which was not yet out of repute. As late as this, too, we read of a purser, found guilty of fraud, being pilloried at Charing Cross; and of a surgeon being imprisoned for three months for suffering a child he had inoculated with the small-pox to be brought to him through the streets.

We will put the finishing touch to our little picture by relating a singular circumstance that happened to Lady Liverpool at the House of Lords. The Duchess of Orleans one day was present in the peeresses' gallery with Lady Liverpool, and after the prince-regent had left the House, they proceeded to examine the tapestry and other objects of curiosity; Lady Liverpool leaving upon her seat a valuable Indian shawl worth 150 guineas. On their return, the shawl was gone, and though every endeavour was made to recover it, it was nowhere to be found. Some weeks after, a man respectably dressed called at the private apartments of one of the officials, and left a brown-paper parcel, which, on being opened, was found to contain the missing article, without any note or explanation whatever.

TROUBLES AT SANDSTONE.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—THE BEACH.

It was seven o'clock, and a glorious summer morning; all Sandstone had been up and busy for the last two hours, and the beach presented a lively scene. It was the height of the fishing-season, and the first boats were just putting off from shore. Under the cliffs, near the boat-house, sat a party of girls and women engaged in mending nets, while ever and anon there issued, from the narrow street behind, a bare-legged lass, or a sun-burnt old woman, staggering under the load of linen they had come to lay out to dry upon the clean white sand.

Five days have passed away since the Sunday evening when Jim Bowes and his companion rowed out to the burning ship. It has taken these five days to restore the little hamlet to its customary tranquillity. An hour after the old sailor had set out that night, a report spread through the village that there was a ship on fire off Sandstone. A straggler on the beach was the first to give the alarm, and a few minutes after, every man, woman, and child in the place was down at the water's edge. A couple of boats were quickly manned, and at the head of one of them was Michael Hawser, prompt and cool as usual. The boats shoved off, and the women and children stood and watched them anxiously and silently as they rowed away in the evening gloom.

Long after the stars had come out overhead, and night fallen around, did they stand there, gazing out on the lurid glare in the sky that shewed where the doomed ship lay. The chapel clock on the cliff struck twelve ere they beheld the boats reappear in sight. There were three coming in this time. One of them contained Jim Bowes and Susan Watson. Their mission had been successful. They had picked up the drowning men, clinging to a spar, and taken them half lifeless into their boat. Soon after, they had fallen in with the two other boats, and, relieved from further danger, had returned in company to shore. How the old sailor and his companion came to be out there, were facts perhaps never very clearly explained to these good folks; enough that their promptitude and courage had saved the lives of two fellow-creatures.

The men who lingered on the burning ship were the captain of the vessel—a small trader from Smyrna—and an Englishman returning home from a tour in the east. The crew had basely deserted some hours before, and, in their mad haste to escape, had swamped the only boat the ship possessed, and perished. The hapless vessel, thus deserted, was drifting on with the current to destruction—there being happily no wind—when Jim Bowes set off to its aid, and rescued the two men lingering on the wreck from the terrible death that awaited them.

The excitement which all this had occasioned in Sandstone may be imagined. The Smyrniote captain and the Englishman were conveyed at once to Captain Linders's cottage, as the only place that contained spare beds, and were well cared for by the old captain and his housekeeper. The next day, the foreign seaman was able to take his departure for the seaport town to which his vessel was bound, but his fellow-voyager remained behind. Mr Lennox was suffering from the injuries he had sustained, and it was said that he had broken a limb. Every morning and evening, inquiries were made of Mrs Fisk, the housekeeper at Prospect Cottage, as to the health of her patient. All Sandstone was interested in his recovery. This very morning, it is the topic under discussion amongst the various groups assembled on the shore.

'Have ye 'eard how the young stranger is to-day, Marlin?' asks old John Finner, a stout fisherman, of a neighbour standing by.

'Who knows where Billy Winn is?' cries one of the young women amongst the net-menders. 'We want him to run and ask Mrs Fisk how the gentleman is this morning.'

Billy Winn is the general messenger of the village—a poor, half-witted lad, who will run any errand within the compass of his intelligence for the small remuneration of a brass button or a bad farthing. So Billy Winn is sought and despatched for Mrs Fisk's latest bulletin.

Meanwhile, the business of the day proceeds on the beach. Michael Hawser is making ready for a day's fishing, for though his trade is a landsman's now-a-days, he retains his liking for the old calling, and turns a pretty penny in the year by his boats. Ellen is amongst the net-menders by the boat-house. Her father comes up to her, and says: 'I shan't be back till flood-time to-night.' He glances round upon the group, and his face darkens as it rests upon the figure by his daughter's side.

'You needn't sit by *her!*' he mutters. He takes Ellen roughly by the shoulder, and regardless of the quiver that passes over her companion's frame, bids her find another seat.

Susan Watson's face is hidden from the eyes turned on her, but a great tear rolls burning down her cheek. Michael Hawser has cast a stone at her that will leave her bruised and wounded for many hours. That done, he goes down to his boat, thanking God that he is not afraid to rebuke His enemies, nor ashamed of the service in which he labours, and, confident of the Lord's favour, puts off to sea with a calm heart and good conscience.

The sun rises high in the heavens, and the morning light is changing to a dazzling glow, when Billy Winn comes back from Prospect Cottage with a report that the stranger has left his room, and is going to make his appearance on the shore this morning. Ere expectation has had time to become exhausted, the report is verified by the appearance of the stranger himself, leaning on the arm of Captain Linders. They make their way down the little street, past the high flag-post and the boat-house, and join the group of people on the beach.

'I've brought some one to see you, good folks. I've brought a gentleman who wants to thank some among you with his own lips for what you've done for him,' cries the old captain, as he approaches. 'Where's Jim Bowes, eh?'

Everybody looks round for Jim Bowes, but nobody sees him. Lazy old dog! he is quietly smoking his pipe in the shade behind the boat-house—the only idle pair of hands in Sandstone this morning. But the children know where he is—as when do they not?—and being betrayed by these small allies, he comes forward with his hands in his pockets, looking as grave as a judge.

'Is this Mr Bowes?' asks the stranger in a fine musical voice. 'Then I can only acknowledge my great debt to you, sir. I owe you far too much for thanks.'

They look straight into each other's eyes. No two human faces could be less alike. Mr Lennox is handsome, young, and refined; Jim Bowes is coarse, old, and almost ugly.

'Well, sir, you're welcome. You'd do as much for me, I 'ope,' said the old seaman curtly. 'You've another to thank, though, besides me. If I hadn't had a cool head and a firm hand by my side, it would ha' been all up with the whole lot on us.'

Jim turned to look for Susan Watson. She had stolen away to escape notice.

'Shall I take yer thanks to my companion, sir?' asked Jim, anxious to spare a search for the girl.

'Certainly; but I must see her myself, ere I leave Sandstone. Second-hand gratitude wouldn't do at all.'

There was a warmth and frankness in the stranger's manner that earned him golden opinions at once.

'Now, captain,' said the young man, turning to his host, 'leave me here awhile to sun myself on these stones, and be off to Lynmouth. I want to make friends with your neighbours.'

So Captain Linders took his departure, and left his guest to while away an hour, and gather strength in the sunshine. George Lennox well knew how to turn such leisure to account. He chatted with the old women, paid compliments to the young ones, scrambled away all the pence in his pocket amongst the children, and, in short, tried to please, and succeeded in pleasing every one around him. A murmur of applause broke forth as soon as he had taken his departure.

'That's a real gentleman, that is!' said one. '*He's* got no pride about him,' cried another. 'Did you see him playing with the bairns?' asked a third.

These simple-minded people were not singular in their estimation of the stranger. Mr Lennox had left the same favourable opinion behind him in a score of places. Few persons could resist him, where he wished to please. His popularity was, perhaps, easily earned, endowed as he was, both by fortune and nature, with gifts that never fail to attract. He was rich, but no niggard; well-born, but without affected airs of superiority; above all, he had the most persuasive speech, the most winning smile, and the happiest knack of adapting himself to the society of the hour that ever mortal was blessed with. He had been travelling for two years in the east, and had acquired, in the course of his wanderings, some curious experiences, and a well-tanned skin and bushy beard. He was returning to England, when accident threw him on the shores of Sandstone, some three hundred miles distant from his home in a northern county.

Perhaps it was the kindness of his host; perhaps it was the contrast between Syria and Sandstone; perhaps it was the natural indolence of his character, ever ready to twist circumstances into a pretext for inaction; perhaps it was none, and perhaps it was all of these things, that induced Mr Lennox, at the end of seven days, to ask Captain Linders to let him have possession of a bedroom and parlour under his roof for one month. Whatever the cause of the request, the old captain, who had taken a great fancy to his guest, complied with it; and even Mrs Fisk, who, a few days before, had been highly incensed at an unfortunate tourist who had presumed to ask if there were apartments to let at Prospect Cottage—even she made no objection.

So every day, for the next few weeks, the stranger might be seen strolling about the neighbourhood of Sandstone; now carrying a gun in pursuit of the curlews, now rowing along the coast with old Bowes, and now listening to some seaman's yarn at eventide. In three weeks' time, there was not a man in Sandstone who would not have gone through fire and water to serve the handsome, open-hearted, young stranger. Jim Bowes, who had not taken very warmly to Mr Lennox on their first meeting, confessed he was in the wrong. 'He 's the smartest chap I ever clapped eye on!' cried the old fellow with enthusiasm. 'Ay, and his heart's i' the right place too. To see him eatin' his dinner in the boat-house along wi' us rough chaps, and drinkin' out o' the mug without a bit o' pride! Bless yer soul, there ain't one in a thousand who 'd do it!'

Coming home together along the shore one evening, Jim Bowes exclaimed: 'It 's a rum thing, sir, to think what a little we knows o' one another, ain't it? Dash me, but I didn't like the looks on you at first sight; thought you was more like a furriner than a thorough-bred Englishman! It shews as how we oughtn't to judge folks afore we know 'em, don't it?'

'Right, Philosopher Bowes; it does. But, to change the subject: where shall we go to-morrow, eh? We 've about done up the neighbourhood, I think. I hate going over the same ground twice. A week or two ago, I thought it would take a whole summer to exhaust this place.'

'And so it would, too! Yer don't suppose you 've seen all our coast yet! Why, there 's Shingle Bay, and the Black Rocks, and Deadman's Gully, and—— Lord, sir, what a fine shot yon chuffin would be out yonder! What a pity the gun ain't loaded.' Jim pointed to a large bird perched on one of the great stones that strewed the shore.

'Stay! I 'll have him,' cried the young man. In another moment the gun was loaded and raised to his shoulder. Crack! The bird flapped its wide wings, rose staggering into the air, and then, with a sharp, human cry, dropped down like a stone on the wet shore. A scream rent the air as it fell. A girl, sitting under the cliff, ran forward and clasped her hands with an excited air.

'It 's Martha Hawser, as I 'm alive! Dash it, the gun 's frightened her, poor lass!' exclaimed Jim Bowes.

But, no; it was not fear that had blanched Martha's cheeks, and made her lips quiver.

'Is that you, Jim?' she cried aloud. 'Shame on ye, then—shame on ye! You 've done a bad, wanton act. I 've been watching that bird yonder the last half hour; it was doing neither hurt nor harm, but enjoying God's sea and air, for aught we know, as much as mortals do. How dare you men come near, then, with your idle hands and hard hearts, and end its life and happiness i' this way!' Her eyes flashed scorn on them both. She turned to Mr Lennox, and continued: 'This is no sport, sir; neither sport nor profit, slaying a bird like this. *You* have no excuse to plead, for you should know better than he.'

The men stared at the girl in amazement.

'Why, Martha, what 's come to ye, lass? You 're white as chalk, and all of a tremble.'

She retreated a step as the old sailor approached her. 'I 'd rather not talk to you to-night, Jim. See yonder! that bird 's not dead yet; it 's stirring. Go and wring its neck!' She turned away, and bent her steps towards the village.

Mr Lennox stood and watched her for a minute, and then hastened after her. 'I 'm afraid you think me a brute,' he said, as he approached. 'I 'm sorry to have given you pain. Will you forgive me?'

'It ain't in my power, sir. You must ask God to forgive you for destroying one of His creatures thus.'

Martha Hawser was a pale, sickly-looking girl, but she had a brave spirit. She inherited much of the rugged Puritanism of her father's character, but without his intolerance.

Mr Lennox looked puzzled for a moment by her reply, and then said: 'If we were to argue the question, I 've no doubt you would have the better of me. On strict grounds, this sort of sport is not justifiable, I daresay. It 's not heroic nor dangerous, like tiger-hunting; nor useful, like whaling; nor lucrative, like lobster-catching. I know what you 'd say, so I 'll own I 'm in the wrong at once.'

Mr Lennox's manner seemed to arrest Martha. She raised her head, and looked at him. 'I think you *know* what 's right, sir; it 's a pity you don't practise it. A gentleman with your learning and bringing-up should ha' something better to do than idling away his days at Sandstone. We poor fisher-folks ain't the company you 've been used to. You 'll not take my words amiss, sir?'

'Certainly not; I like plain speaking.'

'Then I 'll wish you good-night, sir.' And so saying, Martha inclined her head, drew closer her shawl, and hastened off home across the sandy flat. Mr Lennox stood and watched her retreating figure till it disappeared in the twilight gloom gathering over the shore.

'Well, sir, when you 're ready, I am.'

Mr Lennox started as the sound of Jim Bowes's voice put an end to his reveries; and then, shouldering his gun, he set off homeward without a word. They were close upon the village ere he broke silence. 'That 's a strange girl!' he exclaimed, turning round to his companion in the dusk. 'I must see her again to-morrow, and make my peace. I wouldn't leave any but friends behind me in Sandstone, if I could help it.'

'Leave Sandstone, did ye say!' ejaculated the old sailor in a tone of dismay.

'Yes, Bowes, and within twenty-four hours too.' And without offering any further enlightenment, Mr Lennox bade his companion good-night, and strode off to Prospect Cottage, where a hot supper and a pipe with Captain Linders awaited him.

BITTER BEER AND BEER IN GENERAL.

There are changing fashions in matters of liquor, as there are in matters of apparel and modes of living. Once upon a time, in certain portions of the United Kingdom, our ancestors were able, at a cheap rate, to comfort their inner man with wholesome claret. Once upon a time, 'heavy wet' was a popular beverage, and 'half-and-half' obtained its measure of fashion. Bottled stout, too, had many admirers, and we still find it along with the nut-brown October, home-brewed, at a thousand fine old English houses, keeping up its established reputation. But pale ale, *alias* 'bitter beer,' is the great liquid institution of the present age. Like Holloway's Pills and Mechi's Magic Razor-strop, its fame is universal, and 'it is to be found,' as an advertising publican beautifully states in one of the Sunday papers, 'wherever the civilising face of the white man has penetrated;' in other words, like Scotchmen and Birmingham buttons, it has found its way into all the corners of the earth. No matter whether we go up the Rhine or up the Nile, the little red pyramid of Bass & Co. is constantly obtruding itself upon our notice. Mr Albert Smith finds it at Canton; 'Our own Correspondent' welcomes it amid the burning sands of India; Brown, Jones, and Robinson quaff immense draughts of it on the top of the Great Pyramid; and it is whispered that one of the enterprising Burton brewers has opened up an agency in Yedo for the supply of the at present benighted Japanese.

Burton-on-Trent, so long celebrated for its breweries, is the principal seat of the bitter-beer trade, so far as the malting and brewing of it are concerned; London is the place where the greater part of the sales are effected, and whence the liquor is distributed to the most distant regions of the earth; and Blackwall is its great *depôt*, where the Burton brewers have hundreds of thousands of butts, hogsheads, and barrels, arranged in tiers one over the other to a great height, and extending over many acres. In addition to the dépôt, there are subsidiary stores in various parts of London; and from these the bitter beer percolates to the various hotels and public-houses of the city, and ultimately finds its way down the throats of its 'thirsty souls.'

London alone produces above one thousand million tumblers of ale and porter per annum. A recent essayist, in alluding to one of the great London porter-breweries (Truman, Hanbury, Buxton, & Co.), says: 'The visitor, in proceeding through this establishment, realises, perhaps better than in any other place, the enormous scale on which certain creature-comforts for the use of the town are produced. As he walks between the huge boilers, in which 1600 barrels are brewed nearly every day; or makes the circuit of the four great vats, each containing 80,000 gallons of liquor; or loses himself amid the labyrinth of 135 enormous reservoirs, which altogether hold 3,500,000 gallons—he begins to fancy himself an inhabitant of Liliput who has gone astray in a Brobdingnagian cellar.' Porter, however, is a comparatively modern drink, having been 'invented' so recently as 1730. The three popular liquors in use previous to that year were ale, strong beer, and twopenny; and these beverages were frequently asked for by customers in a compound state—that is, a half of any two, or a third of the whole three, mixed together, so as to form either 'half-and-half,' or 'three-threes,' as might be required; thus giving Boniface, when the three was in demand, the trouble of going to three different casks for what formed after all but one pint of liquor. To obviate much of this trouble and the waste attendant on this clumsy plan of mixing, a brewer of the name of Harwood, in a moment of inspiration, conceived and brought forth a blended imitation of all the three, which he named 'Entire,' and which in time came to be looked upon as a most nourishing and refreshing drink for labourers and *porters*—whence its name.

Ale was a favourite liquor of the Saxons and the Danes, and the use of that beverage can be traced back to the fifth century. In those days, great attention was paid to quality; and persons making bad drink had the option of being ducked in a muddy pond or paying a fine of four shillings. The price of the beverage was at this time fourpence a gallon, or, if spiced, eightpence. Mead, also a favourite liquor of that period, was double the price of spiced ale. The skill of our brewers began to be developed about the fourteenth century, and the brewing of beer was making London famous even at that time. We find the early English poets in a state of exaltation about their draughts of 'moist and creamy ale.' Skelton and others have sung in praise of the same beverage. Shakspeare, however, speaks slightingly of the small-beer of the olden time, and loved rather to sing the praises of 'sack.' We first hear of the exportation of beer in the reign of Queen Elizabeth—five hundred tuns being sometimes exported at once; but at times, exportation had to be checked, because of the scarcity at home. After the introduction of hops, malt liquors were greatly improved, and became more extensively in demand; and according to Baker, the English now 'learned to be drunkards, and brought the vice so far to overspread the kingdom, that laws were fain to be enacted repressing it.' As an instance of the part played by beer in the feast and festival days of the Virgin Queen, it is related by Hume that 'the Earl of Leicester gave Queen Elizabeth an entertainment in Kenilworth Castle, which was extraordinary for expense and magnificence. Among other particulars, we are told that 365 hogsheads of beer were drunk at it. Now, in this quantity, there are 23,000 gallons; and if there were 23,000 persons present, which is not possible, it would still be an allowance of a gallon to each; a tolerable exhibition before a queen.' A curious use was at one time made of the export beer-trade. In 1586, we find it stated, in a complaint to the treasurer of England, that 'there was deceit in the vessels of beer that were transported; that under the name of these passed many barrels stuffed with prohibited goods, as pike-heads, halbert-heads, pistols and match, candles, and soles of shoes of new leather, cut out in pairs of all sizes, and the like, the bungs of the barrels being besmeared with a little yeast, to the hindrance of the commonwealth and the profit of enemies.' These barrels were ultimately returned stuffed with valuable silks, and thus the beer-trade was made a medium for smuggling.

We shall not trouble our readers with the *figures* appertaining to 'beer,' either at these early periods or at the present time; indeed, the statistics of the public breweries would not convey an accurate idea of the quantity of these beverages which were consumed in former days, as ale was universally brewed in all gentlemen's houses, and was likewise made in great quantity in some of our county towns, and sent to London for consumption. About one hundred and fifty years ago, people used to brew once a month; some of the 'browsts' were very strong, and in the provinces particular kinds of ale had each a distinguishing name, as Huff-cap, the Mad Dog, Angels' Food, Dragons' Milk, and Go by the Wall. The progress of the great breweries of London, and the universal celebrity of their drink, as evidenced in the praise of such philosophers and men of letters as Mandeville, Dr Parr, Charles Lamb, Fielding, Smollett, and Goldsmith, soon led to the suppression of a great number of private brew-houses, so that in course of time the majority of families sent to the public breweries for their supplies. But the change since those days which Goldsmith wrote of—

Where the Red Lion staring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt and Parson's black champagne
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury Lane,

to the present age of beer, is very striking. Our porter-brewers are magnates in the land now, and, as Dr Johnson said of their ancestors, they have acquired 'the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice.' We hear of their being able to dine parties of two hundred in one of their vats, which vat, when filled with liquor, is valued at L.40,000; we know, also, that some of them brew 400 quarters of malt daily, and employ almost armies of men; that they require steam-engines of great power, and perfect regiments of fine Belgian-bred cart-horses.

At one period, ale was the universal beverage in Scotland; and Scotch ales have long maintained a high character over all parts of the globe. Neither is the Scottish public-house system, which is now being regulated with so much clamour, of very ancient date: it originated only about the middle of the fifteenth century, when an act of parliament was passed which ordered, 'that in all burgh towns of the realm, and thoroughfares where common passages (roads) are, that there be obtained hostillaires and receivers having stables and chambers; and that men find in them *bread and ale*, and all other food as weil to horse or men, for reasonable price.' Bread and ale are the great points insisted upon, as they are (with the addition of wine) of several other enactments passed about the same period, which we may consider the immediate pre-whisky age. In point of fact, as appears by both local records and tradition, breweries, at that time, though on a small scale, were universal. Every village had its brew-house; and 'twopenny,' a kind of small ale, smart to the palate, wholesome in quality, and not very injurious to the pocket, was the common drink of the country. After this period, French wines became fashionable in Edinburgh, and excellent claret was carted about the city for the purpose of being retailed from the butt at a very cheap rate; and while claret could be had cheaply, it was a favourite among the higher and middle classes. But when the necessities of the Exchequer, consequent on the French wars, imposed heavy taxes on French wines, all took refuge in whisky, hitherto a *low* drink, with a corresponding aggravation of the national vice. And now once again the 'gude folks' of Scotland are coming back to ale, principally in the shape of bitter beer, or Prestonpans.

If our Scotch friends, man, woman, and child, really still consume their eighteen annual bottles of whisky a head, as the *Times* avers, they do it in a quieter and more gentlemanly way than their ancestors, and there is, in consequence, less outward appearance of drunkenness. Scotland still boasts of her popular taverns; and in her large cities, she has hidden away, in some of her closes and alleys, *howffs* having a likeness to those of the olden time; but they do not obtain the half of the patronage that was bestowed on those of sixty years since, where Lawyer Pleydell indulged in his 'high jinks.' The popular tavern of the present time, in Scotland as in all other countries, depends more for support on its solids than its fluids; and the drinking-dens of auld lang syne, which, in their heyday of prosperity, could boast of lordly patrons, have fallen into disrepute. The pale ale, which is the fashion of the present year of grace, was 'invented' by Mr Samuel Allsopp, the father of the chief of the present great firm of Allsopp and Sons, and the partner and successor of a well-known Burton brewer of the name of Wilson; and the first sample of bitter beer was brewed in a tea-pot by Job Goodhead, one of the malsters of the firm! It is now the great liquor of the British in India, and also of our home countries. It has proved a fortune to many, and to Burton-on-Trent in particular, which is a perfect city of breweries. The flood-tide of this beverage may be dated from the year 1850, at which date a great controversy began as to whether strychnine was employed by the brewers as one of the bittering substances. The report originated in a lecture delivered by M. Payen at the *Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers*, in the course of which he asserted that the large quantities of strychnine manufactured in France were destined for England, to be employed in flavouring the celebrated bitter beer of that country. This statement was extensively copied into the Parisian journals, and speedily found its way into the *Times* newspaper, to the great alarm of the British public. The brewers of pale ale were at once on the alert, indignantly denying the rather rash accusation, and employing the most eminent chemists to contradict the statements of adulteration by scientific evidence; and the ultimate result of this calumny was the re-establishment of the maligned liquor more firmly than ever in the favour of the public. The best proof of this is the fact, that there is at present erecting at Burton-on-Trent a leviathan brewery—'a brewery which, when completed, will cover nearly four acres of land, and present one *façade* of more than a quarter of a mile in length. This brewery, which has been designed for Messrs Samuel Allsopp and Sons, is intended for the exclusive production of East India pale ale, for which beverage the demand, both home and foreign, has of late so largely increased that all existing means of supply have altogether failed.'

STORIES OF PRECIOUS STONES.

From the earliest period of the world's history, mankind have attached an arbitrary and marvellous value to precious stones, such as the diamond, the ruby, the opal, the sapphire, and the amethyst. In itself, the beauty of these gems is very great. The rainbow, the sea, the clouds, the most gorgeous flowers, the varying tints and coruscations of the forest, are surpassed by the splendour of these jewels, which man digs up painfully from the bowels of the earth, and polishes with the rarest skill. Sometimes as we search amid the ruins of ancient cities, jewels of exquisite brilliance flash forth upon us from the rubbish, and seem to reveal more than arch, architrave, or column, the greatness of the people who dwelt there in ages past.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century, a poor Arab, unable to earn a comfortable subsistence by labour, who possessed neither house nor lodging of any kind, after working all day in the fields, habitually passed the night among the tombs. Once when the summer was hotter than usual, he happened to be engaged in the corn-fields by a wealthy peasant, who lived near the ruins of Achoris. As soon as night fell, the south-west wind blowing like the breath of a furnace across the Great Desert, drove every person to seek for shelter within doors, or behind some wall or rock. The individual of whose indigence we have spoken was called Sibbi, and he had no friends or relatives to whom he could apply for assistance in his distress. When the hour for closing the doors of the cottages arrived, therefore, he found himself excluded from every dwelling, and wandered away sorrowfully in the dark towards the mountains which overhang the valley on the eastern side. Arrived at the rocks, panting, and half-stifled by the hot wind, he climbed up a little in search of coolness. The higher he mounted, the pleasanter it became. Through the great gaps in the rocks which at times brought down a current of east wind upon the city, nothing now came but a sort of eddy of the night-air, less scorching than the fierce furnace-blast upon the plain below. Sibbi felt refreshed by this slight improvement in the state of the atmosphere, and continued toiling up through rents in the face of the precipice till he reached the edge of the great cistern which once supplied twenty thousand persons with their daily allowance of water. Here he sat down, thinking the air absolutely delicious. Even the wind of fifty days was tempered into sweetness by that elevation, and sported and played among the honey-combed crags like a breeze of Enna or Arcady. Refreshed and soothed, Sibbi at length slept; and the sun was already lighting up the desert, and sheathing the broad river with gold, when he awoke. Sibbi was not a worshipper of the picturesque. He was hungry, and hunger is insensible to the charms of scenery. The hour, he knew, would soon be at hand when he must descend into the hot valley, and moisten his coarse black bread with the sweat of his brow; too happy even so to ward off the threatened visit of death. But as he sat in this quiet and breezy spot, he experienced extreme reluctance to renew his labours. Why not enjoy hunger and idleness for one day? He could lie in the shadow of the cliff, and look down proudly upon the slaves, scorching and frying among the dhourra stubble below. He resolved to enjoy this luxury, and remained sitting on the edge of the cistern, gazing at the heaps of whitish dust with which two thousand years had nearly filled the mighty reservoir. His eye at length alighted on a small object, that immediately riveted all his attention. It looked like a fragment of lunar light gleaming softly and serenely in the rich sunshine. What could it be? It was by no means easy to descend into the reservoir, and when there, it might prove still less easy to climb out again. But the love of adventure is generally the feeling uppermost in the mind of an Arab. Without taking much counsel of prudence, Sibbi leaped into the cistern, and with beating heart approached the object which had lured him into the gulf. There, flanked by two pieces of chalky stone, it lay drinking in the morning light, and then reflecting it upon the eye softened and subdued as if by magic. With the experience which seems common to all orientals, he understood it was some rare gem, and the word which he beheld engraven on its surface might, for aught he knew, be the Great Name by which Suleiman transported the treasures of Kaf into his regal palace among the cedars.

Sibbi had some scruple about touching this wonderful amulet, whose powers might shake the mountains, and call up around him all the terrible legends of the Jinn. But courage came to him as he gazed. If it be not supernatural, he thought, it may still sell for a great deal in Cairo; and emboldened by this practical consideration, Sibbi picked up the gem, and concealed it carefully in his bosom. The next question was how to escape from the reservoir. The rock all round was smooth, polished, and perpendicular, and little less than three times his own height. But everybody is acquainted with the mother of invention, who now came to the aid of the captive Arab, so that by heaping up great stones and quantities of dust against the smooth and slippery rock, he contrived to escape from his prison.

Sibbi now believed himself to be in possession of wealth, and his heart was elated accordingly. He descended hastily into the valley, and without noticing whether the wind that blew was hot or cold, hurried along the path by the river's side towards the Mother of Cities. No one who has ever considered the oriental mind can fail to have been struck by its strong propensity towards building castles in the air. Half the pleasures of life in the east spring from this faculty, which levels mountains, dries seas, fills up valleys, and creates at the least touch a paradise in the desert. During his first day's journey, Sibbi was indebted to his imagination for immunity from hunger and thirst; but on the second morning he was fain to have recourse to the proverbial hospitality of his countrymen, and beg a little bread to preserve his stomach from a complete collapse. The more he pondered on his situation, the less enviable did it begin to appear. Who would be the purchaser of the gem he had found? Might he not be suspected of having stolen it, be taken before the cadi, and by way of investigation, be bastinadoed upon the soles of his feet till he should be half dead? Who would give credit to his story of the cistern and the ruined city? 'Verily,' thought he, 'they will say it is an imposture; and I may be condemned and put to death as a thief.' Being, nevertheless, persuaded that nothing can happen but what is written, he comforted himself with the reflection, that if he were hanged, it could only be in accordance with destiny. On, therefore, he went, and in due time arrived at Cairo.

In that great city, which, in miniature, represents the whole east, he found a caravansary suited to his wants, and entering, was waited on by a young woman, who served all travellers, especially the poor and humble, for charity. At first, he had some thought of imparting his secret to her, and taking counsel of her—and well would it have been for him had he done so—but he reflected that the owners of great wealth are surrounded by snares, and that this woman might be in league with the children of the wicked. Accordingly, he accepted her kindness, held his peace, and departed on the morrow, bestowing on her nothing but his blessing, which, in fact, except the gem, was all he had to bestow. With many doubts and much trembling he approached the shop of a lapidary in the south-eastern angle of the great bazaar; and, taking out the jewel from his bosom, which he did with the air and aspect of a convicted thief, he presented it to the master, and inquired what he would give for it. The jeweller was one of those crafty and cruel men who build up their own opulence on the ruin of others. He immediately said to himself: 'This Arab is a robber, who has broken into some mosque and stolen this marvellous opal from the sacred treasury. I will threaten to take him before the cadi; conscious of guilt, he will effect his escape, and the gem will become mine.' But the delight imparted by this guilty scheme could not repress the jeweller's admiration for the extraordinary beauty of the opal, amid the streaks of whose clouds the cunning hand of some ancient engraver had interwoven, as it were, the letters of the Great Name. Sibbi, though no proficient in physiognomy, yet saw enough in the jeweller's face to warn him of his danger, and while he turned round and loudly gave orders to a slave to fetch the *wali*, or police magistrate, the poor Arab snatched the opal from the jeweller's hand, and rushed forth into the street, followed by the wicked master of the shop, and a whole posse of slaves, shouting 'Thief, thief!' Sibbi's worst fears now presented themselves to his mind, and lent wings to his feet. Dashing along without looking before him, he overthrew three donkeys, two blind men, and an old female cake-seller, who called him a pig and an infidel, and preferred sundry accusations against his innocent mother, now in her grave. Sibbi heeded her not, but plunging into the crowd, he found himself in the midst of a procession of dervishes who struck him with the palms of their hands for interrupting their public devotions. Escaping from these ostentatious penitents, he slipped into a dark passage, but upon emerging at its further extremity into the street, he found himself face to face with the jeweller, who was in the very act of laying his complaint before the wali. 'Ha!' exclaimed the wretch, 'behold, there is the thief; seize him, and you will find the gem upon his person.' An aged dervish, with long white beard and majestic countenance, stood by chance close to Sibbi as the words of this accusation were uttered. He did not speak, but giving the Arab a look, unperceived of the bystanders, held his hand half open by his side. Understanding his meaning, Sibbi put the opal into his hand, upon which, calm and unperturbed, the dervish passed on. Reduced to his original penury, Sibbi felt his courage revive. 'Are you mad?' he exclaimed, addressing the jeweller with a fearless countenance. 'What do you talk of? Gems! I am an Arab so poor as not even to possess an asper. Search me,' he continued, to the wali, 'and you will immediately perceive the truth of my statement.' The worthy magistrate had learned, in the course of his dealings with mankind, to distinguish an honest face from a false one. 'I believe your words,' he said to

Sibbi; 'but be frank with me: something has passed between you and this jeweller; explain what it was, and you have the assurance of a believer in the Book that no harm shall befall you on account of your confidence.'

Thus appealed to, the unfortunate Sibbi related his whole story; upon which the wali's countenance assumed a terrible expression, and he exclaimed: 'Verily, the wickedness of mankind is great! I took you to be an honest man, whereas it seems you are a shameless impostor. Produce the gem instantly, or prepare for a dungeon, the bastinado, and the bow-string.' In spite of his protestations, Sibbi was dragged to prison, and the jeweller, with all his friends, was invited to witness his torture and execution on the following day.

Meanwhile the dervish, who lived at the college of the Mosque of Flowers, shut himself up in his oratory, and placed the opal before him on a table of black jasper. Never had he beheld anything so magnificent. Nature, when making this stone, seems to have chosen as a pattern one of those pearly clouds which, filled with soft light, hover about the rising moon, veined, streaked, and fretted with the pale glimmer of the dawn. It has upon the sight the effect of a section of the sky when beauty is filling it to overflowing. But in the estimation of the dervish, the loveliness it had received from the hand of the great Archetype was nothing compared with the charm derived from that great Archetype's name, composed of four letters—the tetragrammaton of the western world—by pronouncing which, with suitable rites, man may command the services of all spirits. The dervish, as might be supposed, was no connoisseur in precious stones, but being possessed by a strong sense of beauty, his admiration increased as he placed the opal in various lights, and held it up between his finger and thumb towards the sun. Sparks of crimson, purple, and violet appeared to flash from it as he gazed, till they were concentrated and lost in a ruby-coloured flame, which glanced and coruscated into all the hues of the rainbow as he changed the position of the stone.

Quitting the Medresi, the dervish proceeded to the house of an honest jeweller with whom he had long been acquainted, and shewing him the opal, demanded to know its value. 'It is worth the revenues of a pachalic,' replied the lapidary; 'but there is no jeweller in Cairo sufficiently wealthy to purchase it.' 'Supposing it were shewn the governor,' inquired the dervish, 'might he not, since he is extremely rich, be inclined to buy it at its full value?' 'I would not be the man,' whispered the lapidary, 'to manage the negotiation—he would certainly seize upon the gem, and bastinado me to death.' 'What, then, is to be done?' said the dervish in perplexity. The jeweller mused awhile, and then exclaimed: 'There is here in Cairo a rich merchant from India, who leaves to-night with the caravan for Syria: he will buy the opal, and enrich its owner with fifty thousand dinars of gold.' 'It would endow a college,' exclaimed the dervish. 'It would purchase a pachalic,' rejoined the lapidary. These suggestions were merely parenthetical. The jeweller carried the opal to the merchant, who gave for it a still larger sum than had been named. The dervish, when he had received the money, offered to reward the lapidary for his trouble; but unless he could purchase the office of a pacha, he was already sufficiently opulent to be regardless of gain: he therefore refused the dervish's offer. The latter, causing the gold to be tied up in two leathern bags, had it borne before him by slaves to his apartment in the college, where he carefully locked it up. He then proceeded to the house of the wali, who was asleep, and his slaves, apprehensive of his severity, refused to wake him. Being questioned, however, they informed him that their master had left with his lieutenant orders respecting the Arab, who, according to the best of their belief, was to be strangled in the morning. Having received this cheering information, the dervish hastened to the lieutenant's house, and found him surrounded by spies and executioners, and furiously intoxicated with beng. With such a man he perceived there was nothing to be done; so he repaired to the prison, and through the influence of his sacred character, easily obtained admittance. Having consulted with Sibbi, it was agreed that escape from injustice should be purchased with money. The jailers were bribed; and the Arab found himself at liberty with a fortune larger than that of any other man in Cairo. Leaving the bulk of his property in the hands of the dervish, he proceeded to Constantinople, where he purchased from the sultan the office of cadi, and returned to reform the manners of his native country. He received his reward. Having pronounced a righteous judgment in a difficult cause, he was stabbed by the unsuccessful suitor, and was soon followed to the grave by the old dervish. The bags of dinars became the property of the Mosque of Flowers, and were employed in building that beautiful oratory at the door of which two hundred poor persons still receive a loaf daily by the posthumous charity of Sibbi.

What became of the opal? The merchant who had purchased it was killed near Alexandria, among the ruins of which the gem was lost; some years later it was picked up by a fellah, who sold it for two or three piasters to Roboly, the dragoman of the French consulate. This man, who understood nothing of its value, asked Hasselquist, the Swedish traveller, how much it might be worth, but received no satisfactory answer. It afterwards passed into the hands of Lirancourt, French consul at Cairo, who carried it to Constantinople, where it seems to have been bought by the French ambassador. Lastly, some time before the Great Revolution, it became the property of the famous Duc de Nivernois, who used to exhibit it to admiring visitors at his gorgeous soirées in London. According to some, it afterwards passed into Russia; but we are altogether unable to trace its fortunes beyond the troubles which broke out in France after the storming of the Bastile.

Two other opals have obtained some celebrity—one, which belonged to the Emperor Leopold II., for its extraordinary size and beauty, it being said to have been an inch in diameter; the other, for the singular adventures with which it was connected. When the great Afghan conqueror, Nadir Shah, made his descent upon India, stormed Delhi, and rendered himself master of the Peacock Throne, he is said to have entered a Hindoo temple, where he was inspired with admiration by the jewels that blazed on the great idol. Its eyes were made of gems of different colours, and one of them was an opal of rare splendour and brilliance. Even in the best days of antiquity, sculptors, when fabricating statues of the gods, sometimes formed the eyes of precious stones; but they were in these cases artistically made, the pupil being of black jasper, the iris of turquoise, and the white of diamond; the face, neck, and bosom were of the finest ivory, which appeared to acquire additional fairness by contrast with the robes of gold in which they were folded, and which in one instance were valued at a quarter of a million sterling. The idols of India have been chiefly remarkable for their ugliness and grotesque magnificence. The Mohammedans abhor these symbols of a rude superstition, and it has always been one of their chief claims to be regarded as reformers to make war upon the gods of India through their images and fanes; but Nadir Shah was instigated much less by piety than by cupidity. Like a true oriental, he would have ravaged a whole continent, in order to render himself master of what the Asiatics denominate the gem of gems—a milky opal. On his return to Persia, the conqueror was careful always to have his jewel-caskets with him in his tent; and it has been said by some of his eastern biographers, that after cutting off the population of a whole city, he would sit down peacefully in the cool of the morning to gaze on the ensanguined ruby, the deep vinous yellow of the beryl, the mimic flame of the carbuncle, or the soft sweet green of the emerald. In the opinion of most men, there is a mystery in the interior structure of these stones, which, when one set of rays strike upon them, appear serene and calm to their greatest depths, whereas, when viewed by the aid of others, they flash and sparkle, and seem to flood the surrounding air with emitted splendours. Nadir was fully sensible of the charms of this kind of poetry, the only thing, perhaps, except power and carnage, that could strongly move his soul. Charles I. of England was, it is well known, distinguished as a virtuoso, and laid out immense sums in collecting works of art. Among his curiosities there was an engraved diamond, the rarest ever known, which was probably transported to the continent by Henrietta Maria, to purchase powder and great guns. There it fell into the hands of a French traveller, who carried it with him into Persia, and there sold it for a large sum of money to the shah. When the House of Sefi was subverted by Nadir, this exquisite jewel became his property, and, in all likelihood, was in his tent with the great opal on the morning of his assassination. Many of the crown-jewels of Persia then disappeared, having no doubt been stolen by the soldiers. We now lose sight of the opal till it reappears in Russia, as the property of Prince Potemkin, who enriched himself by the plunder of whole provinces.

In ancient times, the opal occupied the place now conceded to the diamond, though far more numerous specimens of it than are now to be found existed. It was a special favourite among the Romans, and the senator Nonnius, during the proscriptions, was offered exemption from exile if he would relinquish his celebrated opal to Mark Antony. He preferred banishment with his gem, to Rome without it; and no wonder, when we consider into whose hands supremacy over the Eternal City had fallen. Nonnius probably chose Egypt for his place of exile, and there lost the jewel, which, after more than seventeen hundred years, was found in the reservoir of Achoris, if we may, in truth, venture to identify that stone with the one shortly afterwards discovered in the rubbish-mounds of Alexandria. However, it is only by conjecture that we can attribute the opal of Roboly to the senator Nonnius. The descriptions left us of the ancient gem do not exactly correspond with those given of the modern stone. It had an olive hue, they say, when exposed to the sun's direct beams, but became opaque when contemplated in its slanting rays. Placed between the eye and the light, it assumed a deep ruby tinge, throwing off sparks of fire in parallel lines. Many of these peculiarities may perhaps be attributed to the force of imagination which transforms to its own likeness every object in nature.

The flaming opal, which rivals the carbuncle, the ruby, and the chrysolite, was once found in various parts of the world, but is now so rare that it has been doubted by some lapidaries whether it ever existed at all. We ourselves, however, have seen it amid a collection of gems in Italy, where it occupied the chief place. Most of its neighbours had been engraved, and owed their principal value to the skill of some ancient artist of Corinth, Rhodes, or Sicyon; but the flaming opal lay enshrined in its own beauty, having no facets, but simply long slab-like planes on the side, and converging into a crown above. The light played through it as through the intricacies of a labyrinth, reflected, refracted, ascending, descending, and glittering through a thousand diminutive channels, assuming every instant new tints and hues which again became confused with each other.

An extremely well-informed traveller returning from the east brought with him what he conceived to be an inimitable treasure. This was a flaming opal of the largest size and richest brilliance; but on shewing it to a jeweller at Florence, he was informed that it was only the imitation of an opal in glass. He had embarked nearly his whole fortune in this venture, and, in the extremity of his irritation and disappointment, determined to destroy both the false gem and himself. Late in the evening, he shut himself up in his apartment, where he kindled a strong fire of charcoal, into which he resolved to cast the glass, and then to choke himself with the burning embers. He took the beautiful imposture into his hands, which, as the light of the lamp fell upon it, threw off into the air so many gorgeous tints that it seemed to swim in a sea of splendour. As he turned it round and held it up before his eyes, its loveliness increased—now a bright flame played in its centre, and now a white incandescence shot along its surface. But his heart was steeled against its beauty, and he was about to cast it into the censer, when he heard a gentle knock at the door. On throwing it open, he beheld before him a man in a leathern garment, begrimed with smoke and soot. 'I bring you,' said the stranger, 'a welcome piece of news—your gem is no counterfeit; I heard my master say so after you left his shop this morning. I am an admirer of precious stones; and have brought you this intelligence, lest the despair which I saw in your countenance should induce you to inflict some injury on the noblest opal in the world.' The traveller, in raptures, would have forced on him a handsome reward. 'No,' exclaimed the workman; 'I only desire to behold the gem once more; to take it in my hands, to press it to my lips, as the most precious of nature's works.' He then took his leave; and the traveller, proceeding to Vienna, sold the gem to the emperor. This was the famous opal of Leopold II., whose large size we have mentioned above.

CHEERFULNESS.

Nothing upon the earth for ever grieves;
No bird for ever sad and songless lives:
Even the poor small worm
Puts on, before he dies, his glorious form,
And, for a little space,
Chases the sunbeams round the mountain's face.
The rose that has been ruffled by the storm
Droops not for aye her leaves;
After the rain,
She lifts her tearful head, radiant again.
Yea! not for ever bow the autumn sheaves—
Though weighted from above,
As hearts are with their love,
With all the riches that the heaven gives;
Sometimes, on sunny days,
A gentle wind will raise
Their golden ears, ripe for the garner's eaves.
The chilly frost before the warm sun yields;
When the cloud-shadows hang above the fields,
They linger not—
Look once again—sunlight is on the spot!

F. C. W.

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UPON THE PARISH.

I am a denizen of an enlightened district, known to those who know it at all by the name of Doubledale, and comprising within its limits the angles or fag-ends of four distinct parishes. We Doubledalians are in some sort a peculiar people, inasmuch as we are almost entirely wanting in the middle-class element. We have abundance of gentility and refinement among us, and we have a sturdy class of agricultural labourers, village handicraftsmen, and domestic servants, who, taken in the aggregate, make up our poor. But beyond the butcher, the baker, the inn-keeper, the draper, and a few other trades-people tolerably well to do in the world, we have positively no *tiers-état*. Perhaps if that element had been more plentiful with us, I should not have had the following tale to tell—at any rate, I have a suspicion that way. Let the reader judge.

Mary Gibbs, when I knew her first, was a black-eyed, bright-faced, neat-footed lass of nineteen, busy as a bee in Farmer Brindle's dairy. This must have been at least forty years ago, for I was a child then, and often got curds and cream and junket from her hands in my holiday visits to the farm. Mary had a sweetheart, a stalwart yeoman, somewhat fierce and fiery tempered, who had fluttered all the other candidates for her favour, and kept them effectually at bay. She was proud of her jo, but not averse to anger him a little at times by innocent flirtations and assertions of independence, which Reuben Carter was the last man to accept in a quiet spirit. Hence they quarrelled almost as frequently as they agreed, and sometimes played at deaf and dumb for weeks together. It happened miserably that while one of these fits of estrangement was at its height, Mary, while romping in the hay-field with one of her male cousins, stumbled upon a rake, the prong of which pierced one of her bright black eyes, and deprived it of sight and seemliness for ever.

The bodily sufferings of the poor girl were the least of the bad consequences of her misfortune. Reuben lacked the magnanimity which would have done him honour, and though he visited Mary in her affliction, and made up the quarrel between them, he was not proof against her unlucky disfigurement; and, finally, when she got well of the wound, he told her with a curtness which his ignorance only could excuse, that they were to think no more of each other.

Mary, to get out of Reuben's way, left Farmer Brindle's when the next hiring-term came round, and engaged herself as maid-of-all-work at the house of a relative of my own, at Doubledale. Spite of the loss of her eye, she was still good-looking, and there is no doubt might have married comfortably in her own class, could she have forgotten her first love. But she did not forget him, and never listened to a second suitor. Reuben married within the twelve-month, which made no difference in her resolution; only she settled down into a quiet, sober state of thoughtfulness, marked by more of action and less talk than usual. She now left off those little allurements and vanities of dress which none knew better than she how to dispose of to advantage, and took to a plain russet gown and white apron, which she wore without variety from one year's end to another. People said she was grown stingy and penurious, and was hoarding her money—though what she could hoard out of a wage of six pounds a year was rather problematical.

I remember calling at the house one day when her mistress was not at home, and finding Mary sobbing bitterly—the tears running out of the blind eye in a stream. I asked her what was the matter, and she told me that she had been endeavouring to make a provision for the future, as she was quite alone, without a relation in the world, but that the club at which she had applied for admission had refused her entrance-money, and turned her off because she was blind of an eye. I tried to comfort her, but the blow had struck deeper than I imagined, and the poor wench was writhing under the feeling that all the world had abandoned her on account of her misfortune. I have reason for thinking that after this she gave up all idea of a provision for the future, as a thing beyond her ability.

About this time I left Doubledale, and for five-and-twenty years saw it no more, save at intervals few and far between, in which I have at this time no recollection of the doings of Mary Gibbs. When, about five years back, I came again to reside among the scenes of my childhood, I naturally rummaged up all the old associations, and revived as many of the old memories as would appear at my conjuration. When at length I made inquiries for Mary Gibbs, I found that that once familiar designation had degenerated into 'Old Molly,' or 'One-eyed Molly,' and that she was still living a life of servitude, though not in a regular way. Too old and infirm for constant service, she now wandered from house to house, and from parish to parish, doing and bustling wherever work was to be done—glad of a meal or a sixpence in payment of her feeble labour, and rather tolerated than encouraged by those who had known her in her better days.

Further inquiries brought out further facts. The woman, it was told me, must have saved money, as she spent literally nothing on herself, and had had good wages for thirty years. But it was more than suspected that all her earnings had gone to Reuben Carter's widow and children, for whose sake she had been fool enough to impoverish herself, and would certainly become chargeable to the parish in her old age. I sought out the foolish woman, but she was so altered by time, and the vicissitudes of a hard lot, that but for the wanting eye, I should not have recognised her. She had totally forgotten me, and nothing I could adduce would recall me to her remembrance. She was living then in a tumble-down cottage by the roadside with another old woman, who, crippled with rheumatism, sat at her door in the sunshine making lace.

The old habit of personal tidiness and the old independent spirit yet characterised Molly. She rose early, and went to work, if she had work, or if not, went seeking it, or gathering sticks for fuel, or sat down by her companion with pillow and bobbins, and worked, albeit but slowly and unskilfully, at the lace-making. I know not if at this time she derived any assistance from those who had employed her during her years of efficient service; one thing is certain—she never asked for any—and it is probable that it was but very little that was voluntarily tendered.

Three years back, the winter was bitterly hard in Doubledale. Molly found but slender employment, and the two old women, by all accounts, were hard put to it for food and fuel. In her endeavours to obtain the latter, Molly stumbled in a by-lane through a rut in the snow, and sprained her ankle so badly that she could not rise to her feet. It was shortly after dawn when she fell, and she lay on the frozen ground till after sunset, and there she would have perished in the night, but that her old companion raised the alarm, and sent persons out to search; by whom she was carried home and laid on her bed. The doctor attended her, but was unable to set her on her feet before the spring came round, and then she was incurably lamed, the foot being bent aside owing to the lapse of time between the accident and the application of the remedy. Here was an end at once to Molly's domestic servitude. Nothing remained for it now but the lace-making, and to that she turned with all the energy that age and infirmity had left her. In a few months, by working hard, and for long hours, she was able to earn sixpence a day, besides the cost of material. It was enough, she said—she didn't want much; but when, from any cause, the collector who took all the work of the village, failed to come round, then she was put to shifts, or had to borrow a small sum against his coming.

But Molly had hardly become an expert lace-maker when the sight of her single eye began to fail. She could not afford to give it rest, but went on with her work as long as she could see to go on at all—and not till she could see no longer did she send for the doctor. It was a bad case, such as was not definable by any terms in the English dictionary, and had to be described by long, jaw-breaking Latin words. The doctor was the only man that could give the disease a name, but that was all even he could do in the matter: it was a disorder that refused to be cured, and went on from bad to worse. Poor Molly pined and fretted under the treatment and the confinement, and grew wretchedly thin and feeble before she grew totally blind, as she did after six months of it. When that climax came, the charitable impulses of the few friends she had had all subsided, and, to avoid starvation, nothing remained for her but the parish. But what parish? There was the difficulty. The strip of waste ground on which the tumble-down cottage stood, was owned by neither of the four parishes whose point of junction was supposed to be somewhere thereabout, and was declared to be extra-parochial. Molly had passed her last term of servitude in Podlington, and to Podlington, accordingly, she was driven in a cart at the doctor's orders. The relieving officer of that parish was, however, too sagacious a fellow to take her in on the doctor's authority; and he sent her back again, with a half-quartern loaf. Next day, she was mounted in the cart once more, and despatched to Much Bingle, with orders, if they would not take her in there, to carry her on to Stoney Bingle, where she *must* be taken in, as it would be too late to return that day. The authorities at Much Bingle were as sagacious as the Podlingtonians, and would not hear of such an unwarrantable intrusion; and on to Stoney Bingle the poor creature was jolted through a tempest of rain that drenched her to the skin, and, getting there just at dusk, was shot out, willy-nilly, in spite of the protestations of the master and matron of the workhouse, who found themselves suddenly saddled with a blind, helpless old cripple, racked with pain and half-dead with exhaustion.

Stoney Bingle is a very poor parish, hardly able to provide for its own paupers, and it was of course all the more indignant at the scurvy trick which had added to its burdens. A meeting of rate-payers was called, and poor Molly was brought before them for examination. They could get nothing out of her, however. She could not recollect where she was born—could not recollect anything, in fact; her memory was gone—she was Mary Gibbs, that's who she was, and she was blind; couldn't they let her alone, and not shake her old bones to pieces in a cart?

It was plain there was no information to be had from Molly; so the master set about searching the four parish registers, in which, after wasting as many days, he met with no more success—the name of Mary Gibbs not being to be found in them all. Meanwhile, Molly grew worse, wasting and wasting away. The Stoney Bingle doctor found out that she had, besides blindness, a whole complication of disorders. He strictly forbade her further removal, averred that it was sheer barbarity to have moved her at all, and gave orders that she should be provided with a water-bed to lie on. Stoney Bingle shrugged its shoulders, and looked blank, but the doctor suggested that they might sue the woman's parish for the expense, and compel them to pay. Stoney Bingle, being indignant, and just in the mood to compel anybody to do anything, seized the idea, sent up to London for the water-bed, paid ten pounds for it, made the poor woman as comfortable as they could, and then set their lawyer at work to see who was to be compelled to reimburse them. The lawyer soon found out that Doddington parish, though it disowned the strip of ground on which the tumble-down cottage tried to stand, had, twenty-two years before, actually levied a poor-rate upon a then tenant of said cottage, and had by that act rendered itself liable. Against Doddington, therefore, Stoney Bingle commenced their action. Doddington, on the other side, bristled up, took counsel's opinion, and set their attorney at work to defend their rights. The two doctors also entered the lists—he of Stoney Bingle publishing an inflammatory statement of the woman's case, and reflecting bitterly upon the carting process as a part of the treatment of his rival—and he of Doddington hurling back the slanderous imputations of his opponent, and ridiculing him as an ignoramus, with a sly allusion to quacking in a water-bed, for which he need travel no further than the first pond. A rejoinder followed, as a matter of course, and the dispute grew hot and furious. The patients and partisans of either Æsculapius took up the quarrel, and all Doubledale was soon split up into the water-bed faction and the cart faction;

private dissensions grew out of the division, and seeds of animosity were sown which will hardly die out with the existing generation.

When the action came before the courts, it proved a knotty and difficult question. The examination of witnesses and records, and the search after precedents, spun out the proceedings to an enormous length, and when at last a verdict was found for the plaintiffs, it was with liberty to the defendants to move a new trial. Doddington moved a new trial forthwith, which came on in the following term, and then Doddington, in its turn, got a verdict. There was some hitch, however, in the evidence, and an appeal was granted, at the instance of Stoney Bingle, to a superior court. A third time, all the expense had to be incurred over again, with additional burdens and delays—and then the upshot was, that the jury could come to no decision at all, but recommended that the business should either be compromised or referred to arbitration.

By this time, the litigants on both sides were getting horrified at the expenses incurred, and in spite of a good deal of outward bluster, were secretly longing for an end to the business. So they chose their arbitrators, and between them it was finally settled that each side should pay its own expenses, and rest content with a drawn battle.

But still the bone of contention remained—the unfortunate Molly. What was, after all, to be done with her? To determine this question, a deputation was appointed to visit her, and investigate her case, with a view to an amicable settlement of the difficulty. When they met on the margin of the water-bed, Molly could do little more than smile languidly in answer to their questions. They could get no coherent reply to any of their inquiries. When she spoke, she babbled childishly of childish things—of cowslips, buttercups, and daisies, and of Farmer Brindle's dun cow, done into butcher's meat fifty years ago.

'I think this here woman's wits is a wanderin',' said one of the deputation; 'what do you think, Muster Boodle?'

'Well, I thinks 'em be,' said Boodle.

'Well, gentlemen, if that's your opinion,' said the master of the workhouse, 'that settles the business—for, you see,' he continued, 'if this woman's wits is wanderin', she's not right in the head; and if she's not right in the head, she's out of her mind; and if she's out of her mind, she's mad; and if she's mad, you see, she's a case for the county lunatic asylum, and we've all of us done with her.'

So spoke the oracle, and so it was decided. Molly went to the county asylum, where she lingered out a few months more in peaceful unconsciousness, and never woke to the sense of her sorrows. Sixpence a day would have kept her out of the cart and the water-bed, and in the use of her faculties to the last; but nobody had an indisputable right to pay it. We Doubledalians flatter ourselves that we are not hard-hearted; we went to law not to save our charity, but to defend our rights—on principle—and now we have to pay the piper.

THE STORY OF A HERO.

If there be any who deny to General Garibaldi the title of the Best soldier of his time, there are none but must admit him to be the most Unfortunate. His fights through life have all been fought up-hill. Now the servant of this republic, and now of that, he has been contending, almost from boyhood, against despots, dictators, and all sorts of powers of darkness in both the New and the Old Worlds, always with inadequate forces, and generally with insufficient results; and yet this Soldier of Misfortune, Freelance as in some measure he was obliged to be, is allowed on all hands to have nothing of the Dalgetty in him, but to have roamed the world like a faithful Knight-errant, wearing the favour of his mistress, Liberty, at all times in his helm.

Although, some years ago, this *Journal* contained a memoir of Garibaldi, compiled from the best sources which were then attainable, we make no apology for reintroducing him to our readers; since not only has the man himself become of tenfold importance, but the story of his life is now related by his own lips.

It is his wandering mode of existence, perhaps, which has rendered him so indifferent to such respectable details as dates, that he has not informed us, in this his autobiography,[*] of the year in which he was born. Born he was, however, and in the town of Nice, where he was brought up to his father's calling, which was that of a common seaman, a reverse of fortune having compelled him to serve in vessels which had once been his own property. Garibaldi was a good son to both his parents, but his mother seems to have been the object of his especial affection.

'One of the greatest sorrows of my life is, that I am not able to brighten the last days of my good parent, whose path I have strewed with so many sorrows by my adventurous career. Her tender affection for me has perhaps been excessive; but do not I owe to her love, to her angel-like character, the little good that belongs to mine? To the piety of my mother, to her beneficent and charitable nature, do I not perhaps owe that little love of country which has gained for me the love, sympathy, and affection of my good but unfortunate fellow-citizens?'

Being, as he very frankly owns, much fonder of play than of work, the boy learned but little, nor that little long. Becoming weary of his school-life, he proposed to some of his companions that they should make their escape, and seek their fortunes, and actually contrived, as he often did in later days, to inoculate them with his own enthusiasm.

'We got possession of a boat, put some provisions on board, with fishing-tackle, and sailed for the Levant. But we had not gone as far as Monaco, when we were pursued and overtaken by a "corsair," commanded by my good father. We were captured without bloodshed, and taken back to our homes, exceedingly mortified by the failure of our enterprise, and disgusted with an abbé who had betrayed our flight. When I recur to the principles which were inculcated at school, and the motives used to encourage us to study, I am now able to understand their unsoundness and their evil tendency. We were in danger of growing up with only selfish and mercenary views; nothing was offered as a reward for anything we could do but money.'

His tenderness of disposition—still retained, notwithstanding the many buffets he has received at the world's hands—was, in youth, extreme; and we find him confessing to 'weeping bitterly for several hours' over a grasshopper whose leg he had inadvertently torn off, as well as 'deriving the highest pleasure,' when quite young and small, in saving a poor woman from drowning—for which sort of aquatic feats, indeed, he has the reputation of a Newfoundland dog. The openness with which his own good deeds are spoken of is, in truth, at first a little startling, although we are soon persuaded that this arises from nothing less than the simplicity of a great and modest mind. The young Garibaldi made many voyages with his father, wherein he perfected himself in seamanship, and the second voyage was made to Rome. Hitherto, he had only admired and thought of that city,

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[*] *The Life of General Garibaldi, Written by Himself.* Translated by his Friend and Admirer, Theodore Dwight. Sampson Low and Son.

'once the capital of a world, but now of a sect;' but henceforth it became dear to him above all things. An ardent lover of Italy, even at this early age, 'I felt a strong desire to become initiated in the mysteries of her restoration, and sought everywhere for books and writings which might enlighten me on the subject, and for persons animated with feelings corresponding with my own. On a voyage which I made to Taganrog in Russia, with a young Ligurian, I was first made acquainted with a few things connected with the intentions and plans of the Italian patriots, and surely Columbus did not enjoy so much satisfaction on the discovery of America, as I experienced on hearing that the redemption of our country was meditated. From that time I became entirely devoted to that object, which has since been appropriately my own element for so long a time. The speedy consequence of my entire devotion to the cause of Italy was, that, on the 5th of February 1834, I was passing out of the gate of Genoa, at seven o'clock in the evening, in the disguise of a peasant, a *proscrit*. At that time my public life commenced; and a few days after, I saw my name for the first time in a newspaper, but it was in a sentence of death.' After this, it became expedient that he should seek his means of livelihood upon the South Atlantic rather than the Mediterranean. Under the flag of the republic of Rio Grande, he embarked with his friend Rosetti on board their hired cruiser, the *Mazzini*, manned by twenty hands, to wage war against the empire of Brazil. Some of his crew were lovers of Liberty in the restricted sense of Licence, rather than that lofty one which he himself entertained of her; and having captured a prize, would have behaved to their prisoners in a privateering, not to say a piratical manner.

'I found them affecting ferocity to intimidate the poor Brazilian sailors, whom we had made prisoners. I took immediate steps to repress all such conduct, and to tranquillise the fears which they had excited, assuring the crew that they should be uninjured, and kindly treated, and set on shore at the first convenient landing-place, with all their own personal property. A Brazilian, a passenger in the *sumaca*, took the first opportunity, after coming on board, to offer me a casket containing three valuable diamonds, in a supplicating manner, as if afraid for his life; but I refused to receive it, and gave peremptory orders that none of the effects of the crew or passengers should be taken from them under any pretext whatever; and this course I pursued on all subsequent occasions, whenever I took any prizes from the enemy; and my orders were always strictly obeyed.' On the River Plata, their provisions failed them, and they had no boat to land with, and thereby procure any. A house, however, being visible about four miles from shore, Garibaldi determined to arrive at it, and at any cost obtain some bullock's meat; he therefore *embarked upon the cabin dining-table*, accompanied by one of his sailors, and moved on towards the land, not navigating, but rolling through the breakers of that dangerous shore, which at last he reached in safety. It was still more difficult to return with the necessary cargo.

'Maurizio and I fastened the meat to the legs of the table, which were in the air, the table itself being placed upside down on the water, and then we launched out into the river to make our way to the vessel. But the weight of the cargo and crew proved entirely too great, and we immediately began to sink, until we stood in the water; and on reaching the breakers, the agitation caused so much rocking, that it was almost impossible to proceed, or even to keep our footing. Indeed, we were in actual danger of drowning; but after great exertions, we reached the *Luisa* with our load of provisions, and were hailed by the shouts of our companions, whose only hope for subsistence depended on our success.'

Never, we imagine, was piece of beef beheld on that side of a dining-table before, nor ever hero, since the days of Peter Bell, saved by such a contrivance. In the Plata he fought his first battle against two armed launches of the Oriental government, which were beaten off after a sharp action, wherein he was very severely wounded. His dear friend Fiorentino perished in this engagement, and he was obliged to give that man to the waters of the La Plata, who, on his part, had promised never to commit his own (Garibaldi's) body to the waves. It seems a singular trait in this modern Ulysses that he should indulge in so 'superfluous' a fancy as this, but 'let a stone,' prays he, in the words of Ugo Foscolo, 'distinguish mine from the innumerable bones which Death sows on land and in the sea.' His wound presently compelled him to seek surgical aid at Gualaguay, which place he was not permitted to leave without the permission of Rosas, 'the traitor of Buenos Ayres, who never acted with a good reason.' As soon, therefore, as he recovered his health, he determined to escape, and provided for that purpose horses and a guide.

'I had fifty-four miles to travel, and that distance I devoured in less than half a night, going almost the whole way on the gallop. When day broke, we were at an *estancia* within about half a mile of the town. My guide then told me to wait in the bushes where we were while he went to inquire the news at the house. I complied, and he left me. I dismounted, and tied my horse to a tree with the bridle, and waited a long time. At length, not seeing him return, I walked to the edge of the bushes, and looked about in search of him, when I heard behind me a trampling of horses, and on turning round discovered a band of horsemen, who were rushing upon me with their sabres drawn. They were already between me and my horse; and any attempt to escape would have been fruitless—still more any effort at resistance. I was immediately seized and bound with my hands behind me, and then placed upon a miserable horse, and had my feet tied under him. In that condition I was taken back to Gualaguay, where still worse treatment awaited me. Such were the impressions made upon my feelings by the barbarous usage which I received at that time, that I have never since been able to recall the circumstances without a peculiar agitation of mind; and I regard that period as the most painful of my life. When brought into the presence of Millau (the governor), who was waiting for me at the door of the prison, he asked me who had furnished me with the means of escape. When he found that he could draw no information from me on that subject, he began to beat me most brutally with a club which he had in his hand. He then put a rope over a beam in the prison, and hung me up in the air by my hands, bound together as they were. For two hours the wretch kept me suspended in that manner. My whole body was thrown into a high feverish heat. I felt as if burning in a furnace. I frequently swallowed water which was allowed me, but without being able to quench my raging thirst. The sufferings which I endured after being unbound were indescribable, yet I did not complain. I lay like a dead man; and it is easy to believe that I must have suffered extremely. I had first travelled fifty-four miles through a marshy country where the insects are insufferable at that season of the year; and then I had returned the same distance with my hands and feet bound, and entirely exposed to the terrible stings of the mosquito, which assailed me with vigour; and after all this, I had to undergo the tortures of Millau, who had the heart of an assassin.'

Through the generous conduct of a lady, however, Garibaldi at length obtained his liberty; and indeed throughout his hazardous career, he appears to have been especially indebted to the fair sex, in whose bosoms his bravery and enthusiasm always excited a powerful interest. While in command of a couple of launches of the Republic, and when on shore with only thirteen of his men engaged in making charcoal, he was surprised in the wood-house by the Imperialist commander Maringue, and fought a hundred and fifty enemies, from nine in the morning until three in the afternoon, killing and wounding many of them, and finally forcing them to retreat.

The entrance of the Lagoon dos Tatos was commanded by two towns in the hands of the Imperialists, so that it was judged impossible that the Republicans should shew face in its waters; but our hero caused his launches to be transported in carts drawn by 200 oxen, over the intermediate country, and with vast labour set them afloat in Lake Tramandai. This part of the lagoon was very shallow, having only about four feet of water at high tide; besides, 'on that coast, which is very open, and all alluvial, the sea is never tranquil, even in the most favourable weather, but the numerous breakers stun the ear, and from the distance of many miles, their roar sounds like peals of thunder.' Here, with his usual ill-fortune, Garibaldi's own launch was wrecked.

'I was at that time on the top of the mast, hoping to discover some point of the coast less dangerous to approach. By a sudden turn, the vessel was rolled violently to starboard, and I was thrown some distance overboard. Although in such a perilous situation, I did not even think of death; but knowing I had many companions who were not seamen, and were suffering from sea-sickness, I endeavoured to collect as many oars and other buoyant objects as possible, and brought them near the vessel, advising each man to take one to assist him in reaching the shore. The first one who came near to me, holding to a shroud, was Eduardo Mutru, and to him I gave a dead-light, recommending him not to let it go off on any account. Carniglia, the courageous man who was at the helm at the moment of the catastrophe, remained confined to the vessel on the windward side, being held down in such a manner by a Calmuc jacket which confined his limbs that he could not move himself. He made me a sign that he wanted my assistance, and I sprang forward to relieve my dear friend. I had, in the pocket of my trousers, a small knife with a handle; this I took, and with all the strength I was master of, began to cut the collar, which was made of velvet. I had just divided it, when the miserable instrument broke; a surge came over us, and sunk the vessel and all that it contained. I struck the bottom of the sea like a shot; and the waters which washed violently around me like whirlpools, half-suffocated me. I rose again, but my unfortunate friend was gone for ever. A portion of the crew I found dispersed, and making every exertion to gain the coast by swimming. I succeeded among the first; and the next thing after setting my feet upon the land, was to turn and discover the situation of my comrades. Eduardo appeared at a short distance. He had left the dead-light which I had given him, or, as is more probable, the violence of the waves had torn it from his grasp, and was struggling alone with an appearance that indicated that he was reduced to an extremity. I loved Eduardo like a brother, and was affected beyond measure at his condition. Ah! I was sensitive in those days! My heart had never been hardened; and I was generous. I rushed towards my dear friend, reaching out to him the piece of wood which had saved me on my way to the shore. I had got very near him, and excited by the importance of the undertaking, should have saved him, but a surge rolled over us both, and I was under water for a moment. I rallied, and called out, not seeing him appear; I called in desperation, but in vain. The friend dear to my heart was sunk in the waves of that ocean which he had not feared in his desire to join with me in serving the cause of mankind. Another martyr to Italian liberty without a stone in a foreign land. The bodies of sixteen of my companions, drowned in the sea, were transported a distance of thirty miles to the northern coast, and buried in its immense sands. Several of the remainder were brought to land. There were seven Italians I can mention Luigi Carniglia, Eduardo Mutru, Luigi Stadirini, Giovanni D.; but three other names I do not remember. Some were good swimmers. In vain I looked among those who were saved to discover any Italian faces. All my countrymen were dead. My feelings overpowered me. The world appeared to me like a desert. Many of the company, who were neither seamen nor swimmers, were saved.'

The affection for his fellow-countrymen in the heart of this iron man is at all times very touching, although he is by no means blind to their shortcomings. He openly wishes that his own people were like those of his adoption, the Monte-Videans, hardened by a life of privations, among whom no lamentations were ever heard, except for the want of permission to fight. 'O Italians,' cries he, 'O for the day when you shall be united and enduring like those children of the desert; the stranger shall not then trample upon your soil; he shall not contaminate your air. Italy will then take her proper place among the first nations of the earth! . . . . Since the battle of Novara, in Piedmont, I could never compare my countrymen with the Monte-Videans without blushing.' The Italian Legion, however, which Garibaldi commanded during the defence of Monte-Video, distinguished itself greatly, and drew forth his warmest encomiums. 'Soldiers of a day, they fought indeed like veterans. Such are the Italians, such are the sons of the despised nation, when struck with the generous idea of what is noble.' What noble ideas had Garibaldi himself, even upon matters of warfare, may be gathered from these reflections upon the taking of Jamaica, a town on this lagoon which he has a peremptory order from his general to cause to be sacked. We particularly recommend them to the notice of the holy Father, who has issued orders of merit for Perugia:

'I wish for myself, and for every other person who has not forgotten to be a man, to be exempt from the necessity of witnessing the sack of a town. A long and minute description would not be sufficient to give a just idea of the baseness and wickedness of such a deed. May God save me from such a spectacle hereafter! I never spent a day in such wretchedness and in such lamentation. I was filled with horror; and the fatigue I endured in restraining personal violence was excessive.'

While engaged in this expedition, Garibaldi first met with that heroic woman who was destined to be his wife. He often reproached himself, poor fellow, for removing her from her peaceful home to the stormy scenes in which his lot perforce was cast.

'I felt most deeply self-reproach on that day when, at the mouth of the Po, having landed, in our retreat from an Austrian squadron, while still hoping to restore her to life, on taking her pulse I found her a corpse, and sang the hymn of despair. I prayed for forgiveness, for I thought of the sin of taking her from her home.'

Among the happiest moments of his checkered life, however, he writes, 'I counted that in which, at the head of the few men remaining to me after numerous conflicts, and who had gained the character of bravery, I first mounted, and commenced my march with my wife at my side, in a career which had always attractions for me, even greater than that of the sea. It seemed to me of little importance that my entire property was that which I carried, and that I was in the service of a poor republic unable to pay anybody. I had a sabre and a carbine which I carried on the front of my saddle. My wife was my treasure, and no less fervent in the cause of the people than myself; and she looked upon battles as an amusement, and the inconveniences of a life in the field as a pastime.' When a little son arrived to these wanderers, their perils became no longer pleasures to them. In the most difficult parts of the road, and in crossing rivers, he carried in his retreats this poor little infant in a handkerchief tied round his neck, and contriving to keep him warm by his breath. It became absolutely necessary, therefore, that some less venturous mode of life should be adopted, and Garibaldi became first a cattle-dealer, and then a teacher of mathematics at Monte-Video. There it was, and in the Monte-Videan cause against Buenos Ayres, that, now as sea-captain, and now as land-general, our hero principally distinguished himself, and won the admiration of all, and the devoted affection of his banished countrymen, the Italian Legion. It was from thence, and with the remnant of that veteran band, that Garibaldi sailed, in 1848, for Europe, to aid so signally in the defence of the Italian Republic at Rome, threatened by four different armies. In that exploit, unsuccessful as it necessarily was, he justly reaped more glory than comes to most men from great victories. The autobiographical part of the volume concludes where its interest to us Europeans really begins—with his departure for South America. The insignificant republics of that continent were certainly favoured with a champion such as any commonwealth, however vast, might well be proud of: he has since then greatly distinguished himself in a more important sphere; and he is now placed in circumstances which are likely to tax to the uttermost his energy, and perhaps his noblest self-denial. In Italian politics, it is scarcely safe to predict confidently of the future of even a Garibaldi; but if the volume which we have been considering is to be relied upon, it is to Garibaldi above all men that we must look as the Regenerator of a united Italy.

THE NEEDLE AND THE POLE.

'True as the needle to the pole,' is one of those traditional similes which, under favour of poetical licence, have still a wide popular currency, but which plain matter-of-fact science has put sadly out of joint. The truth is, that this same compass-needle enjoys a much higher character than it has any title to, for its constancy is of a very negative kind. It is steadfast in its attachment to the pole only so long as all other charmers are kept carefully out of the way; but when left to its own devices, is as wavering and shifty as can well be. If people only knew what a fickle little rogue it is, they would not be so fond of pointing to its fidelity as the measure of their own. When the compass was first brought into use, it was, of course, a very rough affair indeed, and a few points out or in was not thought anything of; but as the instrument was improved year after year, and rendered more delicate and sensitive, its irregularities were exposed. The deviations of the compass, on account of local attraction, were known so far back as 1684, and since then, many a sad mishap has been traced to them. In 1803, the war-ship *Apollo*, and with forty out of a convoy of seventy merchantmen under her charge, were wrecked on the coast of Portugal, all because their compasses threw them out in their steering, and made them fancy they were three degrees more to the westward than they really were. At the end of 1842, the *Reliance* Indiaman struck on a rock off the coast of France, and went to pieces. The captain had steered exactly according to his charts, and their accuracy was vouched for by many who had gone the same route. No one could conjecture how the accident had happened, till, soon after, the discovery of a large iron tank among the *débris* of the wreck at once cleared up the mystery. It was then recollected that the tank was placed almost immediately below the binacle compasses; and as the magnetic intensity of a hollow object is as great as if it were solid, it must have exerted an influence on the needle equal to that of 468 tons-weight of iron, and so produced a deviation of several degrees. These are only two out of many cases of a similar kind which might be cited; and, of course, the increasing use of iron in the construction of vessels tended to aggravate the irregularities of the compass. Complaints at length grew so rife that the Admiralty had to bestir themselves. A Commission of Inquiry was appointed; and the result of their report was the institution, in 1842, of a Compass Observatory, under the charge of the late Captain Johnston (the author of an able work upon *The Deviations of the Compass*, from which some of the materials for this paper have been drawn), for the testing and correction of all compasses used in the royal navy; and this step has been attended with the happiest results.

The observatory is situated at New Charlton, within a short walk of Woolwich Dockyard; and is a very shy, unpretending establishment. You might pass it and repass it a hundred times, and never suspect it was an important government institution connected with a great national work. All you see from the road is an elegant domicile, fronted by a trim lawn, and surrounded by a large well-ordered garden, at the end of which, a little wooden summer-house, as it seems, may be observed peeping out amidst the trees. The large house serves as the offices of the department, and the residence of Mr Brunton, the gentleman in charge of the place; a resident assistant; while the unpretending structure in the rear is not a summer-house, but the observatory proper.

In the main building we find one room in the upper story appropriated to the reception of specimen-compasses of different nations and times, from the coarse, roughly balanced needles of the past, to the more complex and finished instruments of our own day; a second room contains a variety of apparatus for experiments with iron, steel magnets, &c.; and a third, a galvanic apparatus, a deflecting instrument, and a specimen of the copper bowl invented by Sir W. Snow Harris for carrying into effect the discovery of M. Arago, that copper stilled the vibrations of the needle.

The observatory itself is an octagonal structure of wood, to which we ascend by a flight of stone steps. It is placed at a distance from other buildings, in order that it may be free from the local influence of iron, and that metal is rigidly excluded from its construction. The nails and rivets, the lock and key, in short, everything that is metallic about it, is of copper. No other metal is allowed to enter the narrow precincts of the observatory; even brass is under a ban, for though, when pure, it is safe enough, it has been found that, if not of the very best quality, the flirting little needle will coquet with it when iron is not at hand. On entering the building, you see before you three stone pedestals, in a line from north to south, built up from the ground through openings in the floor, from which they are kept perfectly isolated, in order that the instruments placed upon them may be as free as possible from all extraneous vibration. On the pedestal to the south stands a tall glass tube, enclosing a collimator magnet, suspended with the utmost delicacy by threads of unwrought and untwisted silk. If these fibres were the least twisted, they would in turn twist the magnet, and hinder it from lying in the line of the true magnetic north. This magnet is provided with an index, so finely graduated, that it contains 160 divisions within half an inch. On the centre pillar is placed a transit instrument, looking through which you can see the collimator magnet gently oscillating backwards and forwards, and can read off on the index the meridian for the moment. Two shutters in the roof open upon the heavens in the direction of the true or geographical meridian, which has been determined by observations on the stars, and a meridian mark put up accordingly, which, being compared with the reading of the collimator, taken by the transit glass, at once shews the variation. This is observed at intervals during the day by the assistant, and carefully recorded.

In general, the daily oscillations of the needle are regular and periodical from east to west, and *vice versâ*, twice a day, each journey occupying some six hours, and depend, it has been conjectured, upon electrical currents produced by variations of temperature at the surface, in consequence of the changes in the sun's position with regard to the horizon. The ground of this theory is, that about the same time in the morning that the influence of the sun begins to be felt, the needle starts off towards the west, as though it retreated before it; but the fact that the same thing has been observed in the case of magnetic needles down in very deep cellars underground, where neither solar light nor heat could possibly penetrate, somewhat shakes one's faith in the supposition. The needle does not, however, invariably move in a regular manner. It is subject to sudden agitations and disturbances, which are caused by temporary discharges of electricity, the aurora borealis, and other meteorological phenomena, and are known to extend simultaneously over considerable portions of the globe. Besides the daily variations of the magnet, a slower and more permanent oscillation between east and west is always going on. About 1660, the magnetic meridian was due north; in 1819, it was in the extreme west—namely, 24 degrees 40 minutes; and at present, it is rapidly changing back again towards the east, being as far on its way as 21 degrees 30 minutes west. When the observatory was first started, a castellated wall was built on an eminence about a quarter of a mile off, on which an index, similar to that of the collimator—only, of course, very much larger—was printed in white and black, for the purpose of indicating the magnetic meridian of the moment; but so rapid is the movement of the needle towards the east, that for the last four or five years the wall has been useless, the magnetic meridian having passed beyond its limits.

The north pedestal, which is somewhat shorter than the other two, is fitted to receive the compass that is to be tested, and is, as it were, the prisoner's dock. There it sits while the trial is going on, and there it is acquitted or condemned. Here is one waiting judgment—let us inspect it. Those whose idea of a compass is confined to the primitive needle poised on a card, will be a little puzzled to understand the construction of a standard compass. So far as you can see, there is no needle at all, yet the card on which the points of the compass are marked points duly to the north. Lift off the card, and you will see how it is managed. Instead of a needle, four slips of the best Strasbourg steel, such as is used for clock-springs, are fastened edgewise to the bottom of the card, which is cemented to a sheet of transparent mica, and poised by means of a ruby cap on a pivot of what is called iridium, a substance harder than steel, and which does not corrode by exposure to the atmosphere. The compass bowl is constructed of copper, in order to calm the vibrations of the needle. The Admiralty Standard Compass is also provided with an azimuth circle, and a tripod for taking observations at sea or surveying on shore, and costs altogether L.25.

Now for the testing. The 'panel,' as Scotch lawyers say, being in the dock, the examiner, who acts in the double capacity of judge and crown prosecutor, having scrutinised the workmanship of the instrument, and seen that its parts are complete and properly fitted together, proceeds to take the evidence of the collimator and the transit as to the exact magnetic meridian for the moment. In the glass of the transit telescope are fixed three spiders' threads, the centre one of which is made to coincide exactly with the meridian for the moment, as shewn by the index. The transit glass is then turned right round, so as to face the northern, instead of the southern pedestal; and if, on looking through it, you find that the centre thread cuts the compass card in two exactly from north to south, then it is considered to be in adjustment, so far as its magnetic axis is concerned. If the two lines do not agree, then the card is taken off, and the steel bars, which are movable, are shifted so as to bring the axis of the card in acordance with the magnetic meridian. This is, of course, the chief point to be determined, but the work of examination is by no means over. A variety of other processes, equally exact and delicate, have to be gone through, and the proofs of accuracy multiplied before a verdict of acquittal is passed. The compass is then provided with a certificate of character, and is ready to be fitted up in any vessel.

The certificate of character, however, only holds good so long as the compass is kept in a place like the observatory—free from the local influence of iron. Once on board ship, it is not to be trusted to without a further examination. The process that is then gone through is known by the name of 'swinging the ship,' which has certainly rather a startling sound about it, especially when the ship to be so treated weighs some thousands of tons, and carries five or six score of guns. In reality, however, it requires no great physical exertion. The compass is placed in the position it is to occupy during the voyage, with all the guns, shot, arm-stands, and everything else that is iron, arranged exactly as they are to be when at sea. While one observer remains on board, another goes on shore with a second compass, and takes up his station in some open spot, where he can be distinctly seen from the ship. The ship is then put with her head due north, and at a given signal, both observers mark the direct bearing of each other's compass. The ship's head is then gently warped round to the next point, when its reciprocal bearings are again taken, and so on round all the thirty-two points of the compass. The difference between the two bearings gives the amount of deviation on the part of the compass on board ship; and a table is made out of its errors, by which, when at sea, the readings of the compass may be at any time corrected. In some merchant-ships, it is the custom to fasten magnets to the deck of the vessel in the neighbourhood of the compass, in such positions as will counteract the local attraction of the iron, and save the trouble of allowing for the errors; but this expedient, though it serves well enough for coasting-vessels, is useless in other latitudes, for while the magnets are permanent in their intensity, the induced magnetism of the iron is constantly changing. For the same reason, of course, when a ship passes from one hemisphere to another, or makes any great change in her geographical position, it is necessary to go through the 'swinging' again, and have new tables of errors made out.

Besides the compasses for the royal and East Indian navies, those supplied by the Board of Trade to the merchant-service are examined at the observatory;

and various foreign states, such as France, Russia, Portugal, Turkey, the United States, Sardinia, and Egypt, are, through the courtesy of our government, indebted to this department for the examination and correction of specimen compasses. Altogether from 1500 to 1700 compasses are here passed in review in the course of each year; and when one thinks of the number of ships amongst which these are distributed, for the correction of the common compasses by which they are steered, it is easy to see the immense importance of this establishment. In the mere prevention of damage to our ships, through accidents caused by errors of the compass, the observatory saves the country every year a vast sum of money; and it has also done a great service in awakening the attention of nautical men to the imperfections of the compass, and to the necessity of having reliable instruments. Some 'old-salts' may grumble a little at being bothered with these new-fangled notions; but when the 'dirty' weather comes, and they find themselves tossing off a dangerous coast, they are more disposed, we suspect, to be comforted by the scientific reflection that they have a good 'standard compass' to steer by, than by the sentimental one that there is 'a little cherub who sits up aloft to look after the life of poor Jack.'

TROUBLES AT SANDSTONE.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III.—THE FAR EAST.

'Mrs Fisk, mum, is Muster Lennox in the way? If so be, I'd like to see him.' Thrusting his grizzled head in at the kitchen doorway of Prospect Cottage, Jim Bowes made the above inquiry of Captain Linders's housekeeper, next day.

'No, he ain't in the way; and what may be your business, pray?' Mrs Fisk spoke in a somewhat sharp key, and stirred not from her post by the fire, for veal cutlets require concentration of mind, and it doesn't do to be disturbed when you pride yourself on your cookery.

'You're busy, mum; I'll look in again,' said Bowes apologetically.

'Hey?' cried the old lady, turning round with a fork in her hand, and a fiery visage. 'You'll do what? Bless my soul, if it ain't you, Jim! Why couldn't you say so before? Walk in, and sit ye down. Mr Lennox will be home directly—dinner's waiting.'

Thus invited, the old sailor stepped into the kitchen.

'Why, what *have* you got there? If ever there was a man fond o' rubbish, it's you, Bowes. We want no more o' your tackle here, I'm sure. This house is full enough of such like.' Mrs Fisk alluded to a small armory of ramrods, gun-stocks, and fishing-rods that Jim Bowes carried under his arm.

'These be Mr Lennox's property. I've been a-cleanin' 'em up a bit. He won't want 'em any more, I 'spects.' Jim gave a melancholy glance at the memorials of past exploits by field and flood, as he laid them down on the kitchen dresser.

'Put 'em on the floor—put 'em on the floor!' cried Mrs Fisk; and Jim was in a fair way for a scolding for his want of regard for the spotless piece of furniture, when there came the click of the garden-gate, and the sound of footsteps on the gravel-path outside.

'You'll excuse me entering through the kitchen, Mrs Fisk, but I want a word with you,' said Mr Lennox, putting his head in at the door with a good-humoured smile. 'Hollo! Bowes! you here. The very man! I want you, Jim, to run over to Lynmouth for me, and bring back a dozen of Wesley's hymn-books, well bound and of good print. Are you in good walking trim to-day? Here's the money. Get back by seven, and keep the change for your trouble.'

Jim could not have looked more astonished than he did, had he been desired by Mr Lennox to go and purchase him a dozen elephants, or a pair of ostriches, or a talking-fish, in Lynmouth market. 'Hymn-books, did you say, sir?' He took the money, looked at it, turned it over, and then stared at Mr Lennox with a puzzled face.

'Well, Jim, got anything more to say?'

'No, sir; hymn-books, you said, I think? But if you're goin' away to-day, why'——

'But I'm not, Jim. Changed my mind since last night—never do keep it four-and-twenty hours; do I, Mrs Fisk? I see; all my fault—dinner spoiling. I'll be ready in five minutes;' and so saying, Mr Lennox hastened out of the kitchen.

Jim Bowes stood lost in thought for full five minutes. At the end of that time his face suddenly brightened, and bidding Mrs Fisk good-day, he set off on his journey. 'Ay, ay,' muttered the old fellow to himself as he went on his way, 'I like that; I do. It looks well on him. He wants to make it up wi' Martha Hawser, and he couldn't ha' found a better way.'

This solution of the difficulty was so satisfactory to the old sailor, and it placed his errand in such a pleasant light, that he made a mere nothing of the four miles between Sandstone and Lynmouth. He was back again ere sunset, following the pathway along the top of the cliff, with the parcel of books under his arm, stopping from time to time to wipe his brow with his cotton handkerchief, and give a look at the sun sinking grimly to rest behind three black bars of cloud that stretched across the sea. He was gazing out westward, when suddenly he beheld a figure stand between him and the flush in the sky. A minute before, and not a soul was in sight: the figure seemed to have risen up out of the long grass, a few yards from where he stood.

'I've been waiting for you this hour,' said Susan Watson—it was she who spoke—'waiting here to speak to you alone, and where none might hear us. You told me I'd a hard time before me, but it's harder nor I thought. I'd better be lying out yonder at the bottom o' the brig—where I should ha' been, but for you—than leading this dog's life.' Her brows were knitted, her lips compressed; her whole figure expressed resentment and dogged suffering.

'Nay, Sue; you forget what you have to live for,' began the old sailor; 'you forget your promise'——

'No, I don't, Jim. That's the hardest of it all. It's mother and the children as will suffer: it's them as I feels fur.' Her voice shook, but she checked herself, and continued: 'He's done it, Jim: Michael Hawser's refused to give me work this turn. I went down to the yard to-day, to ask to be taken on (he's engaging hands for the winter); but he bade me go about my business. I offered to do any work he'd set me to, either at the sail-making or the rope-walk. I begged hard for them at home; but it was o' no use. He turned me out o' the yard before 'em all, wi' words harder than blows.'

'He'll come round, Sue, he'll come round.'

The girl shook her head.

'When I think o' them at home, and winter before us, and mother ill wi' grief and trouble, I'm nigh beside myself. It's all my doing—my doing! O Jim, I ain't got a friend in all the world!' She hid her face between her hands, and cried bitterly.

'Yes you have. I'm your friend, ain't I? Then don't go and tell a lie. I'll go and talk to Michael this very night, and we'll see what can be done. Come along, my lass; look up. See what I've brought you for the old woman at home! It's real stingo, I can tell you.' The old sailor placed the half pound of tea he had been purchasing in Susan's trembling hand, and patted her gently on the back, bidding her cheer up.

The sun had set, and night come down over the village and the sea, when Jim Bowes, having delivered his parcel at Prospect Cottage, started out for Michael Hawser's house. It was the neatest and best built in Sandstone, and was the most thriving home in the place. Twenty years of thrift and good management as fisherman and seaman, together with lucky ventures of late years in the sail and rope making trade, had placed Michael in prosperous circumstances. He was the owner of several cottages, possessed a couple of fishing-smacks, was a deacon of his chapel, and, both in secular and in spiritual affairs, occupied an important position in the community where he dwelt. In spite of his severity, Michael Hawser was regarded by his neighbours as a good landlord, a just counsellor, and an honourable man. When Jim Bowes presented himself in the sail-maker's parlour, he was by no means without hope of the success of his mission.

'Sit down, Bowes,' said Michael graciously to his quondam companion, as he stood twirling his sou'-wester in the doorway; 'come near the fire, and sit down.'

'Thank 'ee, Michael; I'm not cold. 'You're as warm and snug here as—as muscles,' replied Jim, at a loss for a simile.

'Yes, Martha feels chill o' nights, and so we keep up a good fire,' said Michael, laying hands on the poker, and stirring the fire into a glow.

'You don't look over and above well, Miss Martha. I 'ope that fright last night didn't'——

'O no, Jim; don't trouble about that. I'm well as usual, I think. It's only my cough as troubles me.'

Martha smiled at Jim from her arm-chair by the fire, and went on with her knitting with a tranquil face. Her pallid complexion and thin features offered a striking contrast to the blooming appearance of her sister, who was engaged in putting away the tea-things, and making the chamber neat for the evening.

'Martha isn't so well as I'd like to see her to-day—not by a long way,' whispered Michael in the old sailor's ear. 'She had a bad night last night, and queer dreams. She looks pale and wasted-like, don't she?' The father sighed, and sat and gazed at his daughter with a sorrowful face. Jim was the first to break silence. He was not much of a diplomatist, so he plunged into matters forthwith, and, in a few words, related the object of his visit. Before he had done speaking, Michael Hawser interrupted him.

'Say no more, Bowes; say no more. Susan Watson's had her answer from me, and it's o' no use your trying to beg her in. I can't do it. I've an account to give o' my stewardship to a Master who will have His servants keep clean hands and hearts afore Him. I'd be wanting in my duty to Him, if I refused to put to shame the evil-doers.'

Jim hinted that Susan's mother and little brothers were not evil-doers.

'Bowes, have ye never heard that the sins of the guilty are oftentimes visited on the innocent? I'm sorry for Mrs Watson, but I can't answer other than I've done. If you'll stay and have a bit o' supper wi' us, well and good; but I won't hear any more o' this matter.'

Jim Bowes muttered some excuse, and was about to take his departure, when there came a knock at the door. Ellen rose to open it, and quickly returned to announce that the stranger gentleman was there, and wished to know whether he might be allowed to enter.

'Ask Mr Lennox to walk in,' said Michael, looking considerably surprised at the announcement; and in he came.

'Good-evening, Mr Hawser. I hope you will not think I take a liberty in coming in upon you at this hour. I called here this morning to inquire after your daughter—whom I foolishly annoyed last night by my gun—and, in the course of a ten minutes' chat, I heard some mention of a scarcity of hymn-books in your Sunday-school class. I come to ask if I may be allowed to supply the deficiency'—he turned to Martha as he spoke—'for, after the annoyance I caused you last night, it will be some little satisfaction to me to be of use to you, even in so small a matter as this.'

Martha looked at her father, and then at Mr Lennox. 'You're very kind to take this trouble to oblige me, sir. The books will be very useful. Ellen, reach a chair for Mr Lennox. You'll sit down a while, sir?'

Had Martha Hawser been bred in May Fair, she could not have received the guest with more ease and better manners. Ellen presented a chair to Mr Lennox, but with a pretty awkwardness all unlike her sister's quiet self-possession. Perhaps it was the visitor's gaze that covered her cheeks with blushes. Mr Lennox followed her with his eyes till she returned to her seat. Then, turning to her sister, he said: 'Your fireside looks so cozy, I can't resist your offer. I have a bachelor's liking for a bright fire. After three years' absence from an English hearth, Mr Hawser, one learns to appreciate our sea-coal, I can assure you. Don't run away, Jim.' The last words were addressed to old Bowes, who seemed on the point of retiring.

'Ay, ay, you don't see such fires as that in foreign parts; I should say, nowhere,' remarked Michael Hawser.

'Nowhere, sir, as far as my experience goes, and I've travelled some thousands of miles, too,' replied Mr Lennox.

'I hear, sir, that you've been into the East, and seen the places where our Lord and Master dwelt. Is that true?' inquired Michael.

'Quite true. I spent nearly two years in Asia Minor and the Holy Land.'

'Then you've seen Bethany and Jerusalem, and Sinai and the Jordan?' asked Martha, her eyes kindling with interest.

'Yes, all of them.'

'O sir, I'd like to hear you talk o' these places!'

'I shall be very much pleased to tell you anything about them. It is always pleasant to revive my recollections of travel. I kept no notes or diaries, as orthodox people do, so when my memory fails me, the record of my travels will be irrevocably lost.'

'I should think, sir, you'll not easily forget some places you've seen,' remarked Martha.

'No, not easily. I have a picture on my memory of a sunset by the Sea of Sodom—molten lead with tawny streaks of light streaming through wind-torn clouds; and another of a calm morning in the olive-valley of Gethsemane, that will never grow dim, I think.'

'Gethsemane!' murmured Martha in a low voice, her dark eyes riveted on Mr Lennox. And the little auditory drew nearer the speaker, and hung upon his words, as he told them of his wanderings amongst the sacred places of the earth.

The evening sped swiftly away, and when the traveller consulted his watch he, as well as every one else, was surprised to find it so late. The amount of knowledge one of his hearers had displayed about the places he had been describing, astonished Mr Lennox not a little. 'You've read a great deal about Palestine, have you not?' inquired he of Martha.

'Not much; but I think I remember pretty well what I've read.'

'Your remarks are more like those of a person who has visited the spots than of an inquirer about them. You must have studied history too.'

'I 've read Josephus, and the history of the Saracens, but not much else. We haven't got many books in the house.'

'I 'm sure you know every word there is in all we have!' cried Ellen, and then she blushed as she caught Mr Lennox's eye fixed on her, and pricked her finger with her needle.

'I 've wasted many hours that should ha' been better employed, I 'm afraid,' said Martha.

'But you don't think reading a waste of time?' remarked Mr Lennox.

'It depends on what you read. I think to read the sort o' books one sees in the Lynmouth Library is worse than wasting time.'

'Do you mean the works of fiction?'

'I mean those idle stories they call novels.'

'But there are good as well as bad novels. Some touch and improve the heart.'

Martha shook her head doubtingly. 'People as lives in a world of real sorrows and real sins don't need such like to touch their hearts; and as for improving them, if the Bible can't do that, no novels can.—Father,' she continued, 'will you give us prayers? I feel ill to-night, and must go to my room, if Mr Lennox will excuse me.'

'Reach me the Bible, Ellen, and call Kezia in.' Whilst his daughter summoned their old domestic from the kitchen, Michael roused up old Bowes, who, tired with his afternoon's walk, and rendered drowsy by the fire, had been snoring audibly the last five minutes.

'I've not looked at my books yet, Mr Lennox. I must see them to-night,' said Martha, placing her hand on the parcel lying on the table. 'Here's a knot on the string; can you lend me a knife, sir?'

'I'm afraid not. Stay,' continued Mr Lennox, as Martha was about to unfasten it with her teeth; 'I've got something here that will undo it.' He slipped his hand inside his waistcoat, and drew out a small sheathed knife of curious shape and workmanship. It was studded with stones or coloured glass, and it glistened in the fire-light as he drew it out. 'This will cut it in a twinkling,' said Mr Lennox.

But his hand is arrested by a sudden grasp, and a loud cry rings through the room: 'Father! father! the knife! O my dream, my dream!' With a look of terror Martha Hawser shrank back from Mr Lennox, and staring at him with a convulsed face, fell senseless to the floor.

'I can't understand it,' said Mr Lennox, as, half an hour afterwards, he and Jim Bowes made their way down the unpaved, unlighted road that constituted the main street of Sandstone. 'I can't make it out. The knife was given me, twelve months ago, by a Mohammedan, at Cairo, whose child I had cured of an ague by a few doses of quinine. I don't see what associations Martha Hawser can possibly have with it.'

'Martha 's a strange lass, sir,' replied the old sailor. 'It 's only of her dreams as has troubled her. She has uncommon queer dreams, has Martha.'

Late that same night, Michael Hawser sat by his daughter's bedside. 'Father,' said the girl, raising herself from her pillow, with an anxious face, 'you mustn't ask me; indeed, you mustn't. I can't tell it to you.'

Michael repeated the question he had just put, in a stern and peremptory tone. It admitted of no denial.

'It was this, then, father,' said Martha, with trembling lips. 'I dreamed last night that I was standing outside our chapel, and I couldn't get in, for the doors were locked. There was a great light streaming out of all the windows, and I looked in, and'—a spasm passed over Martha's face—'I saw you lying dead on the chapel floor, with that knife—the very same; I knew its glisten in a moment—buried in your heart!'

A LITTLE KING AND HIS LITTLE STATE.

Heroes, martyrs, geniuses, philosophers, gladiators, members of parliament, statesmen, admirals, circumnavigators, major-generals, lord mayors, bank directors, currency doctors, and all such great men, can always be found; but those little rulers of a little kingdom who have achieved an immortality by the tie of a cravat, the deportment of a body, or the regulation of a minuet, have been rare as comets in the firmament of history, from Petronius (Arbiter) down to the present hour. I am told that within the sacred precincts of the royal palace there is always an officer—with the usual number of deputies—whose duty it is to act as a guide to bewildered majesty in all the varied and endless ceremonials of state. This highly important functionary, whom they style the Lord Chamberlain, is intrusted with a power made up of trifles, superior to that which is wielded by the whole cabinet itself. He cannot declare war, nor can he make peace, but he can go a great way towards producing either of these states of national prosperity and adversity. His is the delicate task of regulating the relative social position of those diplomatic visitors who represent the wisdom, power, and influence of their respective sovereigns at the court of the British nation. He has to decide how often an ambassador of a particular state shall be invited to the royal dinner-table; he has to see that the rival grand dukes of Meddlingbeggar-Seidlitz and Meddlingbeggar-Freischütz have not the distinguished honour of visiting the palace on the same occasion. He has to see that the minister plenipotentiary from Lapland is provided with those little delicacies of the culinary art without which life and diplomacy would be a burden to him; and he has to arrange those temporary partnerships in the state quadrilles, where territorial importance dances with Norman nobility, rather than skill with skill, beauty with beauty, and elegance with grace. Such are but a few out of a multitude of real cares of state which weigh upon the mind of the lord chamberlain. What he is, he is by appointment, by family influence; and not by any divine right, any special aptitude, any self-creative power, or any extraordinary force of will. Such a man is an artificial, not a natural production; sustained by his environments, and not rising superior to them; a lord chamberlain, in fact, who was made, but not born. Generations of such men may come and go; may heal diplomatic quarrels by their suavity of manner and knowledge of their art; or may foster new dissensions by a clumsy administration of their delicate office; but the outer world takes little heed of them and their doings, and they leave no mark in the written records of their time. Other men of obscure birth, of defective education, and of no very distinguished physical advantages, appear upon the fashionable horizon at distant intervals; create their own little kingdom by some mysterious power, higher, because more substantial in its manifestations, than genius; and govern it without deputy or delegated authority, according to their own individual and fastidious tastes.

Such men command a hearing, no matter what their different degrees of social influence may have been; and confessedly at their head stands Richard Nash, Esquire, commonly called Beau Nash, the King of Bath. Massaniello was a fisherman; Napoleon Bonaparte was a poor sous-lieutenant; Oliver Cromwell was a provincial brewer; and Richard Nash was born of poor but honest parents, in the obscure town of Swansea, in Glamorganshire, on the

18th of October 1674. His father was a minor partner in a glass-house, and his mother claimed some connection with gentility through her uncle, Colonel Poyer, who had the distinction of being killed by Oliver Cromwell for defending Pembroke Castle against the rebels. Some indications of future power must have shewn themselves in the mind of young Nash, for his father strained his little income to give his son a superior education, and the boy was sent to Jesus College, Oxford, to prepare for the study of the law. Here the proverbial idleness of genius was soon made manifest, and the future King of Bath does not seem to have reaped any advantage from his university life, or to have left any trace of it, except a first and only affair of the heart with a young lady whose name has not been handed down for immortality. His tutors sent him home with much good advice for himself, and many instructions for his father.

The advice and the instructions seem to have been disregarded, for his next step in life was to enter the army by purchasing a pair of colours. His military life, however, was very short, as he soon became disgusted with even the slack attendance and moderate duties required of him, and he entered his name as a student in the books of the Temple. His studies, as might have been expected, were chiefly devoted to that second-rate luxury which was within his means; to dressing in an ostentatious style, that might have been judged tawdry by the canons of a severe taste; and to courting the bows and notice of that nobility whom he was afterwards destined to rule with a firm but becoming hand. Like all persons who have shone as distinguished members in that sphere to which the ambitious young Templar was now aspiring, he possessed the invaluable quality of a perfect self-assurance, disturbed by no nervous sensitiveness, or fear of becoming ridiculous. When he attempted a bow, he threw his whole intellect into the performance; marred it by no haste, by no want of respect for what he was doing, and concluded it with the calm consciousness that he had achieved perfection.

For some years Mr Nash lounged away his leisure about town, gaining the acquaintance of many persons of fashion, birth, and fortune. In those days it was customary for the inns of court to entertain our monarchs with revels or pageants upon their accession to the crown, and this ceremony being accorded—for the last time—to King William III., the choice fell upon Mr Nash to conduct the whole with proper effect and decorum. The entertainment gave such general satisfaction, and brought out the peculiar abilities of Mr Nash in such a manner, that the Dutch monarch at once offered him the honour of knighthood. This Mr Nash thought proper to decline, at the same time delicately hinting to majesty that the offer would not be unacceptable if accompanied by a fortune. This suggestion his majesty, being at the time rather pressed for finances, did not entertain, and young Mr Nash was unrewarded in money-tribute for his taste and his pains.

The die was cast. As the first essay dropped into the editor's box, and proving successful, makes the future author; as the first applauded appearance upon the amateur theatrical boards produces the future tragedian or comedian, so the first triumphant discharge of the duties of a master of the Temple revels, made Mr Nash a master of the ceremonies for life.

Besides his assurance, the future King of Bath had some virtues and some merit. If not brilliant, he was easy; his manners were always considered good, as they never relapsed into a state of rude familiarity; he was never seen in a dirty shirt; and though not strictly just to his creditors, he was very generous to persons in distress.

Two wagers are on authentic record which Mr Nash was bold enough to win at this time: one of fifty guineas for standing with no other clothing but a blanket at the door of York Cathedral, as the congregation were coming out of church; the other a wager of a much larger sum for riding in Lady Godiva fashion through a village on a cow.

These little eccentricities were thought nothing of at a time when young gallants drank wine strained through their mistresses' gowns, ate the shoes of the beloved ones tossed up in a fricassée, and swallowed tallow-candles instead of toasted cheese.

Mr Nash was now thirty years old (1704 A. D.), without fortune, or any prospect of acquiring one. Up to this time he had led a life of expedients; but he now entered openly upon the profession of a gamester. The spirit of gaming, introduced in the time of Charles II., had thriven considerably, though it was confined in England to the metropolis. At the close of autumn every year, sharpers from all countries arrived for the winter, leaving again at the approach of summer for Aix-la-Chapelle, Spa, and the Hague. Bath, Tunbridge, Scarborough, and other places of the same kind, were then only the resort of such as went for relief of disease; their pleasures were rural, and the company was a mixture of broken-down splenetic London invalids, and hearty rustics in a state of rude health. People of fashion had no agreeable summer retreat; and when they reluctantly left the town, it was to spend their time with tenants, farmers, squires, parsons, and parsons' wives. The great want of that age was a place where they might enjoy each other's company, and win each other's money, as they had done during the winter in town.

About the year 1703, when Queen Anne arrived there for her health, the city of Bath began to be frequented by people of distinction. The company was numerous enough to form a country-dance upon the bowling-green, to the music of a fiddle and a hautboy; and the amusements were varied with saunterings, in fine weather, in the grove, between two rows of sycamore-trees. Several learned physicians (Dr Jordan and others) had even then borne testimony to the salubrity of the wells; and the public pleasures, in 1704, were put under the direction of Captain Webster, a notorious gamester, as master of the ceremonies.

The amusements, immediately before the advent of Mr Nash, were not considered elegant, nor even delicate. General society amongst the fashionable classes was by no means established; the aristocracy were haughty, refusing to keep company with the gentry at any of the public entertainments; smoking was permitted in the rooms; and ladies and gentlemen appeared in a disrespectful manner at balls and assemblies—the former in aprons, and the latter in boots. There were no regulations as to the time of meeting and departure, and when the company liked each other—which was very seldom—they danced till morning.

The lodgings for visitors were paltry and expensive; the dining-rooms and other chambers were floored with boards coloured brown with soot and small-beer, to hide the dirt; the walls were covered with unpainted wainscot; and the furniture consisted only of a few oak-chairs and a small looking-glass, with a fender and tongs. The city itself was mean and contemptible; there were no elegant buildings, no open streets, and no uniform squares. The Pump-house was without any director; and the chairmen permitted no ladies or gentlemen to walk home at night without insulting them. To add to all this, the whole place was threatened with ruin in its infancy, for one of the greatest physicians of the day taking offence at some affronts he had received, had begun to write against the medical efficacy of the waters, in a published pamphlet, wherein he said 'he would cast a toad into the spring.'

It was at this moment that young Mr Nash—the future King of Bath—made his quiet and unobtrusive entry into the unconscious city. He heard of the physician's threat, and at once, seeing his advantage, he assured the people that if they would give him leave, he would charm away the poison of the doctor's toad with music. He was the right man, at the right time, in the right place. He was joyfully empowered to set up a band of musicians; the company very sensibly increased; the new-comer triumphed, and Beau Nash was declared King of Bath by the unanimous voice of the visitors and people.

He had reached, at one fortunate bound, the extreme height of his ambition; and no one could say that he did not fill his exalted position with dignity and honour. He had no other hold upon his supporters than the ability with which he discharged his duties; and if many greater monarchs had only enjoyed their power by the same uncertain tenure, there would have been many shorter reigns to divide the chronicles of the historian.

Beau Nash had some wit, which he spread as much as possible; and when this failed him, he had plenty of vivacity at command. His town intercourse with people of fashion had taught him the characters of most of the nobility; and he was tolerably acquainted with many of their private intrigues. He numbered amongst his friends 'Old Sarah,' Duchess of Marlborough, who consulted him upon leases, bridges, canals, the well-known cascade in Blenheim Park, and the liveries of her footmen. He understood rank and precedence with the utmost exactness (here was the born lord chamberlain), and being fond of show and finery himself, he soon became a pattern of dress for others. His habitual charity increased in his new position; and though constitutionally extravagant himself, he was fond of advising prodigal young men for their welfare. He was a good keeper of secrets; and humane to the foibles of people, when they were not present to defend themselves. Though he gamed high, he always played very fairly.

The first act of his beneficial reign was to promote a music subscription for a band of six performers, and for lighting and sweeping the rooms. The Pump-house was immediately put under the care of an officer, by the name of the Pumper, for which he paid the corporation an annual rent. A row of new houses was begun on the south side of the gravel-walks, before which a handsome pavement was made for the company to walk on. Not less than seventeen or eighteen hundred pounds were raised in one year (1705-6), by subscription, and laid out in repairing the roads near the city. The streets began to be better paved, cleaned, and lighted, and the licence of the chairmen was repressed. The company being still obliged to assemble in a booth, to drink tea and chocolate, or to game, Beau Nash undertook to remedy this inconvenience; and by his direction, one Thomas Harrison erected a handsome assembly-house for these purposes. A better band was procured, and the subscription was raised. Harrison had three guineas a week for the room and candles; and the music, two guineas a man. The money Beau Nash received and accounted for with the utmost exactness and punctuality. Gardens were added to this assembly-house; and the beauty of the suburbs continued to increase, notwithstanding the opposition of the corporation, who at this time looked upon every useful improvement, particularly without the walls, as dangerous to the inhabitants within.

The power of Beau Nash was now secure; and to support it in a regal manner, he gave his subjects laws, which he drew up himself, and placed in the pump-room. These laws do not exhibit Beau Nash to any advantage in a literary capacity; but it should be remembered that the letters and dispatches of Oliver Cromwell were badly spelled, even for that time, and still worse put together. Beau Nash's laws, for all their defects of mere style, were suited to the people and the occasion; and what is more, they were strictly observed, for they were administered by a man who was determined and impartial. Inspired by the character of his mission, he rose superior to all considerations of rank and station, and lectured a duke or a duchess upon any irregularity of dress or fashionable conduct with all the firm severity of John Knox when he preached against the vices of courts and palaces.

The balls, by his directions, were to open at six with a minuet, danced by two persons of the highest distinction present, and to continue until the clock struck eleven. Then the master of the ceremonies ordered the music to stop, by lifting up his finger; and after some time allowed for becoming cool, the ladies were handed to their chairs. Royalty itself had no power to alter these regulations of the King of Bath.

He was not less strict with regard to the rules and proprieties of dress. On one occasion, he stripped a white apron from a noble duchess, and threw it amongst the ladies' women, on the hinder benches, declaring that none but *abigails* appeared in such an article of costume. He found more difficulty with the gentlemen in putting down duels and the use of the sword; but he succeeded at last, by having both the disputants arrested, whenever he heard of a challenge. The country squires were by no means submissive to him in giving up their favourite boots, and he only carried his authority by the aid of a rather weak satirical song of his own composition, and a satirical sketch, which was acted by a puppet-show.

The city of Bath, under this new and beneficial reign, now became the favourite theatre of amusements for all people of fashion. Upon a stranger's arrival, he was first welcomed by a peal of the Abbey bells, and then by the voice and music of the city waits. For these civilities, the ringers generally received a present of half-a-guinea, and the waits of half-a-crown, or more, in proportion to the person's fortune, generosity, or love of show. These customs were generally liked, although the noise of the bells must have annoyed the sick; but the pleasure of knowing the name of every family that came to the town, counterbalanced the inconvenience. Invalids are fond of news, and upon the first sound of the bells, everybody sent out to inquire for whom they rang.

After the family were thus welcomed to the city, it was the custom for its master to go to the public places, and subscribe two guineas at the assembly-houses towards the balls and music in the pump-room, for which he was entitled to three tickets every ball-night. His next subscription was a crown, half-a-guinea, or a guinea, according to his rank and quality, for the liberty of walking in the private walks belonging to Simpson's Assembly-house; a crown or half-a-guinea was also given at the bookseller's, for which the gentleman was to have what books he pleased to read at his lodgings. At the coffee-house, another subscription was taken for pen, ink, and paper, for such letters as the subscriber might write at it during his stay. The ladies, too, might subscribe to the bookseller's, and to a house by the pump-room, for the advantage of reading the news, and for enjoying each other's conversation.

Things being thus adjusted, the amusements of the day were generally begun by bathing, which was no unpleasing method of passing away an hour or so.

The baths were five in number. On the south-west side of the Abbey Church, was the King's Bath, which was an oblong square, the walls being full of niches, and having steps at each corner to descend into it. This bath contained 427 tons of water, which, on its rising out of the ground over the springs, was sometimes too hot to be endured by the bathers. Adjoining the King's Bath there was another of more temperate warmth, called the Queen's Bath, which borrowed its water from the other. There were three other baths in the south-west part of the city—the Hot Bath, the Cross Bath, and one that was not so much frequented, called the Leper's Bath.

The hours for bathing were commonly between six and nine in the morning; and the baths were supplied with fresh water every day, the refuse being carried off by drains into the river Avon.

In the morning, the lady was brought in a closed chair, dressed in her bathing-clothes; and being put in the water, the woman who attended presented her with a little floating dish, like a basin, into which the lady put her handkerchief, a snuff-box, and a nosegay. She then traversed the bath, if timid, with a guide; if otherwise, by herself, conversing in the water with any friends or acquaintances, male or female—for they all bathed together—and when she was satisfied with this part of the day's amusements, she called her chair, and returned to her lodgings. A general assembly at the Pump-house followed upon this, some meeting for pleasure, and some to drink the hot waters. Three glasses, at three different times, were the usual portion for every drinker, and the intervals between every glass were enlivened by the harmony of a small band of music. From the Pump-house the ladies withdrew, from time to time, to a female coffee-house, and from thence they returned to their lodgings, to take breakfast. The gentlemen withdrew to their coffee-houses, to read the papers, or converse on the news of the day, with a freedom and ease not to be found in the metropolis.

People of fashion sometimes gave public breakfasts at the assembly-houses, sometimes ordered private concerts, and sometimes attended these superficial lectures upon the arts and sciences. Concert breakfasts at the assembly-houses were also a common morning amusement; and titled amateur-musicians, who could play upon any instrument, were allowed to join the orchestra, and bewilder the professional performers. When noon approached, some went to church, some went to the parade and the public walks, some to the bookseller's, some to take exercise on horses or in coaches, some to the meadows round the town, and some to scale the romantic precipices that overhang the city. When the hour for dinner drew nigh, the company returned from their different recreations; and the provisions were generally served with the utmost elegance and plenty. After dinner came evening-prayers, and then the company met a second time at the Pump-house. After this, they retired to the walks, and from thence to the assembly-houses to drink tea; the rest of the evening being occupied with balls, plays, or visits. The theatre was erected by subscription (1705 A.D.), by people of the highest rank, who permitted their arms to be engraven on the inside of the house.

Watching over all these titled loungers seeking for health and amusement, was the founder of modern English watering-places, the refined and elegant King of Bath. The magistrates of the city began to find him useful and necessary, and took every opportunity of acknowledging his royalty. His equipage was sumptuous as a lord-mayor's carriage, and that is saying a great deal; and when he travelled to Tunbridge—which was a fashionable province thrown off from Bath, and also under his government—he appeared in a post-chariot with six grays, and outriders, footmen, and French horns. His dress still preserved its early tawdry character, and he always wore a white hat. This state was not kept up by any money saved from the management of his monarchy, nor by any grants made to him by the people to whom he was so useful and indispensable. He lived upon his fair skill as a gamester in an age when gambling was considered one of the necessaries of (fashionable) life. Even at the gaming-table he conducted himself with propriety, not to say humanity; and when he found a novice in the hands of a sharper, he always warned him of his danger. The games then in vogue were Gleek, Pimero, In and In, the Ace of Hearts, Pharaoh, Basset, and Hazard. After an act passed in the twelfth year of William III., rendering these amusements unlawful, the games of Rolly-polly, Marlborough's Battles, and EO, were set up, and were largely supported by the very noblemen who had given their voices in aid of the amendment of the law. Tunbridge claims the merit of being the first place where the revival of gaming flourished; and here it was that the King of Bath was found defiling his royalty. All kings have, in their time, been guilty of crimes and mistakes, and Beau Nash was only mortal like the rest. Charles II. sold Dunkirk for his own private ends; and the King of Bath entered into a secret partnership with two individuals for illegal gambling purposes. No records of business were kept; he was put off with small sums of money at different times, and defrauded at last of several thousands of guineas.

The next blot upon his career was the introduction of the EO tables into Bath, and another secret partnership with the keeper of the rooms. The success of the experiment was far greater than what could have been expected, though Beau Nash, as before, never reaped his stipulated share of the benefit. By a very decisive act passed in 1745, all gaming was thoroughly put down, and the King of Bath having, as he asserted, been defrauded by his associates of something like twenty thousand pounds, was weak enough to give publicity to his secret dealings by the institution of a Chancery suit. His legal proceedings failed, and from that time (1745 A.D.) his unexampled popularity was on the wane. Many enemies arose against him, and his time was occupied in continual disputes. He began to grow weak, decrepit, and garrulous—he was turned seventy—and his favourite mode of refuting slanders was by printed bills, composed in a confused, obscure, unintelligible style, which he used to thrust into the hands of every acquaintance whom he met. In his younger days, he was far from handsome; his person was clumsy, large, and awkward; his features were strong, and peculiarly irregular; and in his old age he was positively ugly.

The most substantial monument of Beau Nash's generosity and humanity was the establishment of a hospital at Bath for the relief of poor people who came for the benefit of the waters. This asylum, though not built with his own private funds, was mainly created by his industry and influence. It was about this period when he received snuff-boxes from the Prince of Orange, and the principal nobility and gentry, when he held levees, and had his buffoons, flatterers, and even dedicators, that a full-length statue of him was placed by the corporation of Bath in Wiltshire's ball-room, between the busts of Newton and Pope. He was no great wit, even in his younger days; and as he grew old, he grew insolent, though always prompt to check any exhibition of the same failing in others. If a lady refused to dance a minuet, he would ask if she had got bandy-legs. He would ridicule natural defects, and was no longer the same gay, idle, thoughtless creature. He forgot how to supply new modes of entertainment; he had outlived the fashion, as well as his general popularity. Happy is the beau whom the gods take young. He grew fretful and peevish, and, what is worse, he forgot the deference due to birth and quality, and mistook the manner of settling rank and precedence. The once great mind was evidently giving way; the greatest of natural lord chamberlains was nothing but the wreck of his former self. It was about this time, when in comparative poverty, that he demanded the payment of an old and singular gambling debt. Playing on one occasion, many years before, with a noble earl who was madly fond of gaming, Beau Nash had the fortune to win the whole of his property, including his estate, and the very carriage at the door. When the nobleman was sufficiently punished for his weakness, the successful player handed back the whole of his winnings, merely stipulating that he should be paid five thousand pounds whenever he thought proper to make the demand. No such claim was ever made by Beau Nash during the life of the reformed earl; but when made, some time after his death, it was honourably paid by his heirs. This is something to balance—perhaps overbalance, considering the manners of the time—the gaming-table partnerships at Tunbridge and Bath.

The broken-down King was now abandoned by the great; and his only resource was to fall back upon those classes whom he had once affected to despise. His position as master of the ceremonies, which he still retained, was sought after by many people who endeavoured to obtain it by blackening the character of the dying monarch. At the advanced age of eighty-six, exasperated by the neglect of those whom he had once assisted in their pleasures and their pains, and unconscious of his very inferior literary capacity, he formed the design of writing the history of his life. The task was never accomplished, nor even begun; and it was left for Oliver Goldsmith to perform, to order, in his Grub Street days, to whose anonymous book we are indebted for most of the facts contained in this sketch.

Shortly before the old King's death, which now rapidly approached, he received a pension of ten guineas from the corporation of Bath, payable on the first Monday of every month. At last he died at his house in St John's Court, Bath, on the 3d of February 1761, aged eighty-seven years, three months, and some days.

He was buried with considerable pomp, fifty pounds being immediately voted by the corporation of Bath for the expenses of his funeral. He was followed by clergymen, aldermen, charity children, masters of assembly-rooms, the beadles of the hospital he had contributed so largely to endow, and, lastly, by the poor and grateful patients themselves. As one of the journals of the time expresses it, the crowd was so great, that not only were the streets filled, but the tops of the houses were covered with spectators. The papers overflowed with hundreds of elegies upon his death, and with epitaphs, groans, and characters innumerable. He was said to be sagacious, *débonnaire*, and *commode;* to be indeed a man, and a constellation of the heavenly sphere. Venus, Cupid, and the Graces were commanded to weep; and Bath was told a thousand times that she would never find such another monarch.

Nearly a century has passed away, and the salubrious city has not found a successor to poor Beau Nash. Times have strangely altered since then. No Abbey bells ring merrily now to welcome the visitor; but he is ushered in by the grinding screech of the railway carriage, the piercing shriek of the railway whistle, and the rumble of the jolting railway omnibus, or the hired railway fly. Streets of low hovels have spread out in many directions; and the city is full of the life and bustle of a crowded native population. The small number of jaded invalids and fashionable loungers who still cling to the half-faded traditions of the place, have shrunk away in long, dismal gray stone avenues and squares, like a withered aristocracy of the past. The minuet, with all its stately glories, has gone with those who danced it; the measured airs of the last century are changed for the street-braying of a wild German waltz; the packages of the once despised bagman are found in the halls of the most exclusive hotels; and the old spa sees all the favours of patronage lavished upon forward rival chits that have neither dignity, history, nor age.

PIANOS.

Let me make a clean breast of it at once, and abide by the consequences—I hate and detest pianos. Whether grand, cottage, piccolo, or cabinet, I hate them. In rosewood, in mahogany, in walnut, in tulipwood, in marqueterie, or in buhl, I hate them. The only time when my feelings are in a degree quiescent, is when the legs of one of these instruments of torture are bound in hay-bands, and two stalwart porters are dragging it off to the Pantechnicon. But even then, when I remember that in due season it will reappear in its usual position, ready, and, as I firmly believe, willing, to give forth its usual sounds, all my animosity returns. Like a bad joke forced into an agreeable confab by some brainless fellow who would divert the conversation for his own base ends, that inevitable piano puts an end to pleasant gossip, eclipses the point of your story by 'counterpoint' of its own, forces your attention into an arbitrary channel, whether you like music or no, and subjects you to a discipline which, when you go into society for recreation, is abominable in the extreme. Of course, you can be ill mannered, and, while the instrument is in full swing, talk fortissimo; but then you make an enemy for life, and life is too short for that. I remember, not long ago, when at a friend's house, the evening promised well for sociability, and when perhaps some delightful little bit of scientific discovery or improvement might, and would have risen on the tapis; when, in fact, I remember, one of our most learned savans had promised to explain the principles of a beautiful new philosophic toy, all chances of the exhibition were lost, owing to the permanent possession of the piano by a young lady, who, enamoured of her performance, scattered her riches in one perpetual stream of airs from every opera under the sun, not even affording us what is termed 'complementary intervals.' For a long time that fair being had said nothing, done nothing, and, I believe, thought as much, when the mistress of the house considered it necessary to ask her to play. Then rose that hillock of white muslin, approached the piano, gravely twisted the music-stool, which always rises with the occasion, and demurely pulling off her gloves, took her seat. Gradually my heart sank within me, for, after a due regard to politeness, our dear professor stole to the door, and made off like a fox from cover; yes, like some sagacious old dog departing from society he does not like, with his tail between his legs, so the dear, good doctor slyly secreted his apparatus in his coat-pocket, and stole away unperceived—the entire charm of the evening gone.

A few years ago, society welcomed me into its most sacred arcanum under the title of a *bon parti*, and I need scarcely add that my popularity with mammas possessed of marriageable daughters was a matter fit for the contemplation of the gods. Invitations came so fast, that the only question was which of them to choose; while the flattery, nay, more, the incense I received might have entirely turned my head, had I not been protected by an ægis powerful in the extreme—I mean that one grand antipathy which I have given the reader to understand.

When I say I was a bon parti, I desire to explain that I was supposed to be in the receipt of from two to three thousand a year; a sum quite sufficient both in strength and sweetness to attract those dear delightful May-flies of society, whose instincts, nurtured by maternal watchfulness, require no honey-bird to guide them to the hive. My abode was in one of the 'genteel' suburbs of London, where I lived rather than at the West End, because I fancied the air was purer, and because I could walk to the clubs every day, and thus get regular exercise. The view from the back of my house, I confess, was not inviting, for the walls of my neighbours' gardens, when seen from a distance, formed a sort of gridiron of brickwork, whereon the feline tribe sat continually by day, but, when the shades of evening deepened, performed such a *nocturne* as strongly reminded me of other performers in other places.

I prided myself upon my house, and upon everything being in it in what is termed 'apple-pie order'—a phrase, by the way, which I wish the editor of *Notes and Queries* would explain. Possibly it alludes to the large amount of crust involved in keeping domestics in order, but the apple-part still remains an open question. In truth, my household generally was, I may venture to say, an extremely well-appointed one; and this fact, added to the general belief as to my ample fortune, was another reason for my being well received by the suburban heads of families who had a fair fluttering child of Eve ready for transplantation into a home of elegance and comfort.

Be it clearly understood, I did not go into grand society: in the first place, because my income was not sufficiently large to enable me to play with success the part of *parvenu*, and also because, by mixing in my own sphere of life, I got both petted and spoiled, which suited my complexion and taste to a nicety. How, then, did I escape the snares and fascinations surrounding me? Was I encased in a *chevaux de frise* of vanity which prevented the trespass of affection or love within the prickly boundary? No; I regarded human affection as one of the most estimable of human prizes. Was it that the selfish exclusiveness of bachelor-life, and, generally, its worthless pursuits, held me enslaved? No; I desired beyond measure to marry, and to concentrate myself in domestic life. Was it that I grew suspicious of being 'taken in,' of being accepted not for myself but my means, not for my person, but my purse? No; I knew perfectly well that amidst all the worldly manœuvring going on around me, the elements for making the most virtuous wives, and, when need be, heroic mothers, were everywhere to be found, and that many a gentle, sweet girl blushed at the forward bad taste of her mamma, and shrank from me because I *was* so exceedingly eligible. What, then, defended me from the shower of manna? What guarded me from that ever-sweet bait which was perpetually around me? Reader, the secret was—every young lady I ever met played the piano! I do not for a moment mean to say the disease was always chronic. Sometimes it took a spasmodic form, and after a prelude or so, it subsided. Sometimes it assumed the shape of scales, which the patients had at their finger-ends. Occasionally it broke out in an ascent of 'perfect major triads.' Anon the complaint became dominant, and then the treatment of the tonic chord was necessary. But still, in some form or other, there the evil was; and in vain I searched for that one *lusus naturæ* who, either from ignorance or neglected education, did not, and could not, play the piano. Of course, I was too good a diplomatist to allow this most unnatural dislike of mine to be known. Had I been so unwise, some clever *materfamilias* would surely have led me astray, if not by a wily pretence that the fair demoiselle had not even a bowing acquaintance with Euterpe, at least by the more innocent means of the *suppressio veri*. Thus I religiously guarded my secret; but every day I became more eager in my search for the El Dorado, and for the period when I might shout Eureka. I will not pretend I desired to find any young lady totally devoid of 'music in her soul.' No one could be more sensitive to melody than myself—at least that sort of melody which has an undefined influence on the mind, partaking of the purely intellectual in combination with the sensuous. I have heard evoked by a common street-player a touch of sentiment, and, as it were, an aroma of sound reminding one, without knowing why, of the minstrel-poets of Provence or Languedoc; while certainly the music of the human voice has a peculiar and almost magical power to lift the curtain of the past, as if we had lived amidst other scenes in other lands, or to open up glimpses of the future, full of sweetness, tenderness, and love. But how different to that scampering over the keys, that running up and down the chromatic ladder, and that general unsettlement of mind, manners, and morals produced by the piano! And then its ugliness! I have seen them made to shut up and look like a cabinet, and so far so good; but the moment the lid was let down, and that row of white teeth and black gums exposed to view, it was all over with me, and I would sooner have contemplated a dentist's paraphernalia. Then, again, look at those awful horizontal things exactly like hearses, containing the defunct remains of domestic peace and enjoyment. Eheu! how I hate them! I have heard the best players in the world, and hate them also. I have seen wire-strung fingers dancing like *fantoccini* along the key-board, and I believe the *maestro* who taught the trick dwells down in *basso profondo*. I have heard such devilries of sound, such agonies of the gamut, such a revolution in acoustics arising from this accursed instrument, as have turned my brain, and no doubt have been the cause of the phobia which now affects me. But here I am again indulging in anathema instead of pursuing the even tenour (O heavens! spell it not tenor) of my story.

At length the great discovery awaited me—at length my patience was rewarded, and my perpetual self-sacrifice approved and accepted by the gods.

O how beautiful was Bertha! How exquisitely soft her touch, how graceful her movements, how full of undulations her walk! Bertha was a poem, an ode, a song, an idyl—everything but a hexameter. When I first met her, I was struck with the exquisite tone of her voice, and the general tone of her manners; and when I discovered there was not a piano in any part of the house, hope dawned upon me, and the aurora of a rising love swathed my soul in its bewitching colours. In sober truth, there was an air of genuine womanhood about Bertha quite out of my power to describe; and since it *is* a certain something which all we men know and feel, yet find difficult to analyse, I will not invade the sacredness of the feeling by endeavouring to do so! How delicious it was to find she possessed resources in herself perfectly distinct from instrumental aid! In short, Bertha, though tall, was perfection; and after I had taken the precaution to investigate every room—ay, every closet—in the house, to make assurances doubly sure in respect to that one desideratum, I made honourable proposals, and was frankly accepted.

When this fact became known, my popularity gradually melted away. Smiles were changed into bows, bows into bends, and bends into cuts oblique or direct. Of course, this only referred to those whose hopes had been dissipated by the Berthaic star about to rise on my domestic firmament; and I was in no way chagrined by the loss of such friends. After a very long search I had found my heart's desire, so I hurried on matters as much as possible, and after some persuasion, an early wedding-day was named.

Man proposes—as I had done—and Heaven disposes: or, as some one has it,

> Life 's a bumper full of woes;
> It cuts a caper, and down it goes;

which elegant and trite apophthegm I soon found applied to my own condition; not that I cut a caper, neither did I go down or collapse, but the carbonic acid gas of my existence was suddenly repelled, and left me, like bad soda-water, stale, flat, and unprofitable. Reader, need I expatiate on the subject, when to you who know so well my idiosyncrasy and weakness, the dreadful fact is imparted, that on the very verge of marriage my fears were aroused that, after all my confidence and love, Bertha *did* play the piano.

One day, I called unexpectedly for the purpose of surprising my beloved by the presentation of a bouquet nearly as big as myself, when at the very moment I knocked I distinctly heard the sound of a piano! In one moment, Hope with her flattering tale led me to believe the tones proceeded from the adjacent house, but a repetition of the same awful sound convinced me I stood upon the threshold of despair. I, however, found sufficient presence of mind to enter the house with a tolerably calm air, and demanded of the servant if Bertha were at home.

'Yes, sir,' replied he with the tags, 'Signor Notetto is with my mistress.'

Signor Notetto! Had the earth yawned at my feet—had I been favoured with a glimpse of the veritable horns, tail, and hoofs of that interesting individual who is not so black as he is painted, I could scarcely have felt more horrified than at this announcement, and how I managed to reach the drawing-room is to me a mystery to this day. As I ascended the stairs, I caught sight of a man with a coal-black beard and moustache, and a roll under his arm; not such a roll as La Farnirina would have appreciated, but a roll of music, which I recognised by its hieroglyphics, by the devilish cuneiform of its character. I cast myself on a settee with that sort of vacant feeling which great grief produces, and taking up a book near me réad these lines: 'More than three thirds or sixths in succession must not be used without necessity, in the similar motion, because that gives to the counterpoint a popular or vulgar cast of melody.' I threw the awful instruction-book across the room, and I believe my mind would have given way under these combinations of misery, when fortunately Bertha entered the apartment. She smiled serenely, and held out her hand; but I touched it not. I suppose I was pale and peculiar-looking, for Bertha was evidently alarmed as she exclaimed: 'Merciful powers, George, what *has* happened?'

After a pause I found words to say: 'Happened, Bertha! happened, do you say? Oh, how terribly you have deceived me—you whom I believed to be the incarnation of truth itself! Who was that I met coming forth from your study?'

To my great surprise, instead of this query producing the effect I expected, Bertha drew herself up rather haughtily as she answered: 'Signor Notetto, my music-master.'

This brief and dignified acknowledgment of her crime somewhat disconcerted me, since she evidently believed the man was the offence, and not the matter; so I thought it only right to her feelings to be explicit, and thus relieved my pent-up feelings and my aching heart:

'Bertha, do you not know I as firmly believed you were innocent of a knowledge of the piano, as I am certain I have a holy horror of it. Your own natural and redundant charms attracted me with the force of the loadstone mountain in *Sinbad the Sailor*; but the chains were only riveted by the belief that you were entirely ignorant of the manners, customs, and habits of that awful machine which I heard grinding just now. For years I have sought in vain for such an one, and at length, when I find her, when I discover yourself arrayed in grace, and ignorant of music, I imagined my bliss complete, and placed my destiny in your hands. Conceive, dearest Bertha, therefore, what I feel when to-day, for the first time, those terrible sounds, issuing by reason of your own fair hands, or fingers, or whatever it is that does it, tell me the dreadful tale that you *do* play the piano; that the awful knowledge *is* possessed by you; and that I am about to marry a woman who will place one of those accursed instruments in the house, to tie my brain in a knot, rend my heart into fragments, and fracture the tympanum of my ear!'

A long ringing silver laugh followed this speech; and when the sweet bells of her mirth had ceased pealing out their merriment, between sobs and want of breath, she exclaimed: 'My—dear George—you—will be the—the death of—me. I took my—first—lesson—to-day, and—it shall be my—last.'

To fold her in my arms, to press her blooming cheek to my lips, to enfold her little innocent hands in my own, to express to her my delight, my happiness and contentment, was but the work of a moment. Signor Notetto dined with me the next day, deeming me, I have little doubt, a fit subject for a commission *de lunatico inquirendo*, and solacing himself for the loss of his pupil by pocketing my cheque, and making a note of it.

L'envoi.—Gracious reader, Bertha is now mine, by reason of affection and parsonic aid; and as I am resolved not to have what is termed by the learned Albrechtsberger 'music in partition,' my house is detached, and I am truly blessed in the possession of a wife who is found wanting in nothing excepting where her powers are weighed in the chromatic scales.

FALLING LEAVES.

Remind me not, O falling leaves, in vain,
Of the brief glories of this lower sphere!
Like you, we fade—like you, we disappear.
We are as bubbles on Life's troubled main.
I saw ye in your splendour. Now, again,
Withered and wrinkled like an old man's skin,
I mark ye scattered o'er the ground. How thin
The thread that doth your life and ours sustain!
Ye falling leaves! how soon, alas! how soon
Ye'll find a grave beneath the trees ye graced.
But who, for glories of sweet May and June,
Upon the air a single sigh would waste?
And who for man in sighs should spend his breath
Led up to Life by the cold hand of Death?

J. E.

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MERRY-ANDREW'S VIEW OF THE WORLD.

The popular fraternity of Merry-andrews claim for their founder one who was at once author, astronomer, scholar, and traveller; preacher and punster; physician and quack; ascetic and boon-companion; monk and mountebank; wise man and fool.

Dr Andrew Borde (or Andreas Perforatus, as he sometimes styled himself) was a Sussex man, and educated at Oxford. He was appointed one of Henry VIII.'s medical advisers, and was a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians; but maugre these professional dignities, he was not above visiting fairs and markets, where he dispensed pills and puns to the crowd attracted by his strong lungs and humorous appeals. Reared in the strict discipline of a Carthusian monastery, he used to hang his winding-sheet at the foot of his bed, wear a hair-shirt, and for three days out of the seven, restrict himself to drinking cold water; notwithstanding which he seems to have been an excellent judge of ale, wine, and good living. Holding fast to his creed when it ceased to be that of the state, he was stigmatised as 'a lewd popish hypocrite and false priest;' misfortunes fell upon him, and he ended his days in Fleet Prison, in the year 1549, aged forty-nine.

Andrew Borde was the author of the celebrated *Tales of the Wise Men of Gotham*, *The Breviary of Health*, and *The Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge.* This last was published in 1542, and dedicated to the Princess Mary. It was the modest precursor of our more pretentious handbooks, being intended 'specially for them which pretend to travel these countries, regions, and provinces, that they may be in a readiness to know what they should do when they come there.' The art of book-making was in its infancy; for, professing to give an account of the people, usages, and coins, with specimens of the language of every country in Christendom, the author, even with the aid of sundry primitive wood-cuts and curious doggrel rhymes, cannot contrive to fill more than one hundred and six small quarto pages, in which the neat rivulet of black-letter indeed meanders through a meadow of margin. He is singularly free from prolixity, and too matter of fact to indulge in travellers' tales. Unlike the modern tourist, he neither annoys with petty personal details, tires with tedious description, nor bores with political platitudes or recondite speculations, but is content to record with commendable curtness his observations on the manners, customs, and natural disposition of the inhabitants of the countries he visited. Taking honest Andrew for our guide, let us see how the world wagged when lady-killing Henry ruled this land.

In the sixteenth, as in the nineteenth century, France was the head-quarters of fashion. The Frenchman of that period delighted in music, dance, and song, and our author puts the following doggrel into his mouth:

> I am full of new inventions,
> And daily I do make new toys and fashions;
> All nations of me example do take
> When any garment they go about to make.

The province of Aquitaine seems to have deserved the name of the Travellers' Joy, for there the wayfarer was sure to meet with good cheer and lodging. A pennyworth of white bread would 'serve an honest man a whole week,' while wine and other necessaries were equally cheap; presenting a striking contrast to the commissariat in Spain, where 'a man shall not get meat in many places for no money, other while you shall get kid and measly bacon and salt sardines, which is a little fish as big as a pilchard, and they be rusty. All your wine shall be kept and carried in goats' skins, and the hairy side shall be inward, and you shall draw your wine out of one of the legs of the skin. When you go to dinner or supper, you must fetch your bread in one place, and your wine in another, and your meat in another place, and hogs shall be under your feet and lie in your bed.' The Spaniards are described as rude, poor, and thievish, wearing cloaks to hide their 'broken gear.'

Borde dwelt some length of time at Compostella. His version of the miracle of St James runs thus: 'A girl of St Domingo fell in love with a young pilgrim on his way to St James's shrine, and he refused to reciprocate that sentiment. To revenge the slight on her charms, the damsel contrived to slip a piece of silver into his scrip; and on the departure of the pilgrims from the town, proclaimed her loss. Officers were sent after the party; the money was found in the young man's possession, and he was at once tried, condemned, and hung; his father and mother proceeding on their pilgrimage. On their return, they went to the gibbet to pray for the soul of the criminal, when, to their astonishment, he spoke, saying: "I am not dead. God, and his servant St James, hath here preserved me alive; therefore, do you go to the justice of the town, and bid him come hither and let me down." Upon which they went to the justice, he sitting at supper, having in his dish two great chickens—the one was a cock-chick, and the other a hen-chick. The messenger shewing him the wonder, and what he should do, the justice said to them: "This tale that you have shewed me is as true as these two chicks before me in this dish both stand up and crow;" and as soon as these words were spoken, they stood in the platter, and did crow; whereupon the justice, in procession, did fetch in alive from the gallows that said young man; and for remembrance of these stupendous things, the priests and other credible persons shewed me that they do keep still in a cage in the church a white cock and hen.' Although he relates the above miracle, Andrew is by no means credulous. He declares that there is not a single relic of either St James at Compostella; and did his utmost to dissuade some of his countrymen from performing the pilgrimage. Finding his arguments of no avail, he accompanied them from Orleans. After suffering much privation, they reached Compostella safely; but on their journey homewards, the whole of the party, nine in number, died from eating fruit and drinking water, in opposition to the advice and example of Borde.

Naples rejoiced in abundance of oil, corn, wine, fruit, and money; Sicily was vexed with much thunder and lightning, and vengeable flies; while the papal city itself sheltered 'little virtue and much abominable vices.' Lombardy, however, seems to have been the *bête noire* of the peninsula. Its inhabitants are described as so subtle and crafty that one in a country was sufficient to spoil it, while it was infested with 'many vengeable cur-dogs, which will bite a man's legs or he beware.' This snarling disposition was shared by their masters. 'A Lombard,' says our traveller, 'sets much store by his beard, and is scornful of speech. He will give an answer with wringing his head at the one side, displaying his hands abroad. If he cast his head at the one side, and shrug his shoulders, speak no more to him, for you be answered.' As if this was not enough to disgust an Englishman, Andrew records that not only do they eat adders, snails, 'frogs' guts and all,' but actually 'consider *mushrooms* good meat!' Much pleasanter is the picture presented by beautiful Venice, where merchants most do congregate, each of whom has a 'fair little barge standing at his stairs, to row through and about the city.' The Venetians themselves are sober, sage men, ever prepared for war, and practising the arts of peace to such good purpose, that the city of the gondoliers held 'no inhabitants that are poor and needy.' Borde treats Flanders, Brabant, Holland, and the Netherlands as distinct countries; but in their characteristics and customs, they are identical. The men are described as honest, kind-hearted, hospitable, and devout; their worst faults being an excessive liking for English beer, and an indulgence in habits not to be mentioned to modern ears polite, and almost too gross for the pencil of a Teniers. The ladies are dismissed with a very equivocal panegyric. '*Many* of the women be virtuous and well disposed,' says Andrew; implying, intentionally or not, that such ladies were exceptions to the general rule. We had always supposed that the credit of appreciating the delicacy of 'the hinder loins of frogs' belonged to our cross-channel allies; but it appears that the olden Dutch reckoned the dish among their luxuries. At this time, too, it would seem that our English climate was unsuitable for the equine race. One of our author's couplets says:

> Great stud-mares we bring up in Flanders;
> We sell them into England, where they get the glanders.

The Germans or High Almaynes were humble in their apparel, but rude and boisterous in speech, and gross in feeding. They actually eat maggots, having '*a way of breeding them in cheese!*' Among them, an unmarried woman lost her character if detected drinking anything stronger than water, which was a privilege reserved for matrons. The Poles were rude and homely, crafty in buying and selling, but peaceable men, loving 'to rest in a whole skin.' They wore their clothes 'with two wrinkles and a plyght,' whatever that might be.

In the account of Saxony, we have the following allusion to Protestantism: 'Martin Luther and other of his factors in certain things did take opinions as concerning priests to have wives, with such-like matters.' The Bohemian is called 'opinionative, standing much in his own conceit,' and made to say:

> For the pope's curse little do I care—
> The more the fox is cursed, the better he do fare;
> Ever since Wyclif did dwell with me,
> I did never set by the pope's authority.

And the Greek speaks even more plainly against the pretensions of the Roman Church:

> All nations under them they would fain have,
> If they so had, yet would they more crave;
> Under their subjection I would not live
> For all the pardons of Rome if they would me give.

Of the heretical opinions of the Greek Church, our orthodox traveller prudently declines to say anything.

The only northern lands visited by Borde were Denmark, Norway, and Iceland. The first he says is a poor country, whose people live chiefly on beans and stock-fish, and 'prowl much about to get a prey;' their only trade being in timber for masts, oars, and bow-staves. Norway was little better off, possessing little corn, drink, or money; the Norwegians bartering fish and gos-hawks with the English for meal and shoes. Iceland was still less inviting, being wonderfully cold, while there were no houses, the inhabitants living in caves like swine, and feeding on raw flesh, old grease, and rusty tallow; so we need not be surprised that the Icelanders were 'beastly creatures, unmannered and untaught. They sell curs, and give away their children.'

So much for the continent; let us come nearer home to the first gem of the sea. An Englishman of the sixteenth century, when Ireland was but half conquered, was scarcely likely to hold the Emerald Isle in much estimation. Accordingly, we find Borde, while loud in praise of the Irish within the Pale as faithful men and perfect livers, describes the 'wild Irish' as slothful, choleric, rude, and dishonest. His disgust is also excited by their utter disregard for wealth, and contempt for the conveniences of civilised life. 'They boil their meat in skins, and care not for pot, pan, or kettle, nor for mattress, feather-bed, or such implements of the household.' Of course, St Patrick's miracle is not forgotten, and we are told that English merchants used to import Irish earth, to drive and keep venomous creatures out of their gardens.

Dr Borde speaks in scarcely better terms of Scotland. The country nearest England he says abounds in fish, flesh, oat-cake, and *evil* ale (Leith ale is specially excepted from deserving the unfavourable adjective). The houses are such as a man might build in three or four hours, the tenants being 'strong thieves living by plunder,' who were contented with one room for man, wife, and horse. The Scotch people are described as hardy, strong, well-favoured, and *good musicians*—four qualities in which they are 'most like above all other nations to an Englishman.' (The modern doctrine, that the English are an unmusical race, would evidently have astonished the doctor not a little.) Considering that but thirty years had elapsed since the fatal fight of Flodden, we cannot share the surprise evinced by our author at the ill reception awarded to Southrons. 'It is naturally given, or else it is of a devilish disposition of a Scotchman not to love an Englishman.' But he does not seem disposed to return good for evil, for he declares the Scotch to be rude and unmannered, and says: 'They will gnaw a bone, and cast it into the dish again;' while they 'crack and boast themselves, their friends, and their country above all reason, for many will make strong lies.'

In Wales, our traveller found goodly castles, much poverty, and many rude and beastly people, who loved roasted cheese, and swish-swash metheglin. In market-towns, however, good meat and wine, and competent ale, were to be got. The faults of the people were idleness, want of chastity, and persistence in 'two stulticious customs;' the first being the practice of selling calves, lambs, and corn twelve months in anticipation. The second we must give in his own words: 'If any of their friends do die, and when they shall be buried and put into the grave, in certain places they will cry out, making an exclamation and saying: "O venit!" that is to say, "O sweeting, why dost thou die? Thou shalt not go from us;" and will pull away the corse, saying: "Venit, we will die with thee, or else thou shalt tarry with us;" with many other foolish words, as the Castilians and Spaniards do say and do at the burying of their friends.'

Singularly enough, Cornwall is treated as a separate country, and occupies as much space almost as England itself. This is not because the author bears any affection to the land of Tre, Pol, and Pen; on the contrary, he cannot say a word in its favour. The country is 'barren;' the language, 'naughty English;' the meat spoiled for lack of good ordering and dressing; while the ale is 'stark naught, smoky, ropy, and never a good top, looking white and thick, as if pigs had wrestled in it;' and the Cornishmen, who boast of their antipathy to legal practitioners, are actually reproached because, 'for wagging of a straw, they will go to law.' The charge was doubtless well founded; and the Cornish dislike of the law may have been the result of a surfeit.

Andrew brings his whip home with him, and commences his chapter on England by lashing his countrymen in some tolerably well-known lines—

I am an Englishman, and naked I stand here,
Musing in my mind what raiment I shall wear;
For now I will wear this, and now I will wear that;
Now I will wear I cannot tell what.
All new fashions are pleasant to me;
I will have them whether I thrive or thee. * *
Yet above all things, new fashions I love well,
And to wear them, my thrift I will sell.

But severe as he may be upon their extravagance, he will not allow any one else to abuse his compatriots, emphatically declaring 'the people of England be as good as people in any other land, yea, much more better in many things, especially in manners and manhood;' while he launches out into praise of the men, strong, bold, and mighty; and the women, full of beauty, who go daily decked, and fare sumptuously. The latter they might well do, since the country produced plenty of *gold*, silver, tin, lead, and iron, and abundance of fish, flesh, and wild-fowl; while, 'if they would keep their corn within their realm, they had enough to find themselves without scarcity, and at a low price.' If our ancestors were independent of foreigners as far as concerns the staff of life, they, like ourselves, were good customers to the wine-producing countries, for we are told that 'although no wines grow in England, no realm hath so many sorts.'

England was not without its wonders; among them we find the Bath waters, 'which be ever hot or warm, and never cold, winter and summer; in winter, the poor people go into the water to keep themselves warm.' The forest of St Leonards, in 'Southsex,' about which the nightingales sing, but never venture within its precincts, and Stonehenge, 'of which men say that Merlin brought to that place the said stones by the devil's aid and craft.' As might be expected from a court physician, our author does not forget to inform his readers how 'the kings of England, by the power that God hath given them, do make sick men whole of a sickness called the king's evil; and hallow every year rings which help them which have the cramp.'

Our traveller, who had seen Paris, Constantinople, Florence, Venice, Cologne, and Rome, will not allow either of these capitals to be worthy of comparison with London, which excels them all in manners, good fashions, and courtesy. He allows the English language to be inferior to the French, Castilian, and Italian—'howbeit, the speech of England of late years is amended'—but makes up for this admission by the following patriotic burst: 'Forasmuch as this most regal realm of England is situated in an angle of the world, having no region in Christendom or out of Christendom equivalent to it; the commodiousness, the quantity, and the quality, with other and many things considered within and about the said noble realm, whereof if I were a Jew, a Turk, a Saracen, or any other infidel, I yet must praise and laud it, and so would every man if they did know of other countries as well as England. Wherefore, all nations espying this realm to be so commodious and pleasant, they have a confluence to it more than to any other region. I have been round about Christendom, and out of Christendom, and did never see or know seven Englishmen dwelling in any town or city beyond the sea, except merchants, students, and brokers, not there being permanent nor abiding, but resorting thither for a space. In England, how many aliens hath and doth dwell of all manner of nations, let every man judge the cause why and whereof, if they have reason to persecute the matter.' (Bravo, Andrew! Very well put!) He marvels much how a small country like Saxony contrived to conquer England, asserting his belief that if Englishmen 'were true within themselves, they need not fear although all nations were set against them!'—a faith that England's sons and daughters will continue to hold, despite all the Cherbourgs in the world.

A DAY ON THE LONGMYND.

A HOLIDAY, an unclouded sky, and an invitation from the president and members of the Woolhope Natural History Society to spend the day with them at Church Stretton, rejoiced my heart exceedingly; and I donned my walking-shoes, with the intention of having a long ramble, and throwing all my cares to the winds. I had often passed the scene of our labours on the Shrewsbury and Hereford Railway, and had as often had an irresistible desire to bolt out of the train, and climb up those grand old hills; but want of time, and the reflection that I should have had to pay my fare over again, had always prevented me. Now, however, I was determined to inspect them more narrowly, and see what they were made of; in which I succeeded, partly from personal investigation, and principally from the discussions and remarks of my brethren of the hammer, which so effectually roused my interest, that I propose to try and do the same for my readers, without inflicting on them a dry geological discourse.

I wonder that Church Stretton has not ere this become a second Malvern. To my mind, the scenery is infinitely finer, though, perhaps, not possessing such a wide-spread panorama, owing to the isolation of the latter; but the variety of the Shropshire scenery is much greater, as well as the extent of the mountain-ranges; while in all other minor points, such as accessibility, it is certainly equal to Malvern. As regards geology, the Church Stretton district is especially interesting, for there we see on a large scale what at Malvern is on a small one—namely, a whole formation, with its numerous series and divisions arranged in tolerably regular order, and spread out at our feet, like a vast volume, ready to disclose to the intelligent and persevering inquirer the secrets of the dim old preadamite world. Geologically speaking, we are standing on the Silurian formation; and not only that, but on the typical tract of country from which the whole of this enormous period was so elaborately worked out by the government surveyors, and embodied in Sir Roderick Murchison's great work *Siluria*. Indeed, this very Longmynd mountain, under whose shadow Church Stretton so peacefully nestles, has given its name to the vast thickness of rock which forms the lowest part of the Silurian system—the rocks known as Longmynd or Bottom rocks, which attain in this district the thickness of 26,000 feet. Imagine a hill, some 1000 feet high, split by some tremendous force into narrow clefts, as if an herculean wedge had been driven in, causing a number of transverse dells or gullies, down which the wind comes rushing with irresistible force, and you have some idea of the appearance of the Longmynd hills. Though covered with a smooth turf, they nevertheless have a venerable and ancient appearance; and well they may, for of all the rocks that compose the crust of mother-earth, in which we have been able to detect the first and faintest signs of life, these are by far the oldest. As regards their composition, we perceive, wherever we can get a section, that they in some places consist of thin, fragile, glossy *schists*, or clay-slates; and in others of beds of sandstone, in which the lines of deposit, and even the ripple-marks of the tides that washed these sandy shores, are visible. After years of diligent search by numbers of earnest and practical geologists, all this mass of rock was declared unfossiliferous; in other words, that the then world when these masses were formed, and the ages which this process of formation took, were unproductive in animal life—that no living thing occupied the earth, or, if it did, that it underwent such complete destruction, that not even a trace remained to mark that it had ever been.

The unsuccessful search after fossils was further supported by analyses of the rock by Dr Daubeny, who failed to detect any phosphate of lime, a material which is abundantly found in the strata immediately above, in which fossils are abundant; so that here we see how the collateral sciences come to each other's aid. The Longmynd rocks have been rescued from the reproach of utter barrenness of life by the discovery of a curious fossil in strata of the same age at Bray-head near Dublin. It is a sort of coralline zoophyte, in appearance like a number of outspread fans placed one above the other in a zigzag fashion, and was named *Oldhamia antiqua* after the discoverer, Mr Oldham. Within the last two or three years, Mr Salter, the government palæontologist, was lucky enough to find in the Church Stretton rocks the trails and burrows of annelids or sand-worms, appearances which harmonise well with the ripple-marks which we have just mentioned, and afford us an insight into the shore conditions which must then have prevailed. The same geologist has also detected a minute portion of the tail portion of a trilobite, which we shall find, ere our day's ramble is done, to have been a crustaceous animal (allied to the living king crab), which was abundant in the Silurian rocks, but at present stands alone in all the 26,000 feet of Bottom rock. It bears the euphonious name of *Palæopyge*, and the geologist who finds the rest of it will at once emerge from obscurity, and be for ever celebrated in the chronicles of the Jermyn Street Museum. These three creatures, together with a few ill-preserved fucoids or sea-weeds, make up, as far as we know, the animal and vegetable creation of those times, though the occasional traces of flakes of anthracite and mineral pitch or petroleum have given rise to much discussion as to their probable derivation from either animal or vegetable matter; but perhaps time will shew. The rambler over the Longmynd will, therefore, not have a full bag of fossils to shew on his return; but to sit down on the summit while gazing on the lovely valley below, and the ancient, though more recent, hills opposite, and muse on the probable appearance of the old world in the days when the annelids burrowed, and the Oldhamia grew, is almost sufficient compensation. Let us cast our mind's eye far back into the millions of ages behind us, and try to realise the appearance of this primeval world, when, if the theory that a gradual cooling of the surface of the globe, since the beginning, be true, the primeval seas must have been at boiling temperature, causing a thick dense steam to hang over the earth; when a solemn silence brooded over the cheerless land, unrelieved by animal or vegetable life; when this very mountain on which we stand was an island amidst the waters of the palæozoic sea, which was slowly depositing around its shores the sands and grits, to be in their turn upraised, forming a new world, with its rapidly widening zone of animal life. To think of these things, fills one with awe; not merely in the fact of our globe's existence for such countless ages, but that it should be given to man to extract such wonderful knowledge, and to make the very stones disclose their inmost secrets.

This important division of the Silurian formation is to be met with in other parts of Great Britain than at Church Stretton; namely, at Harlech in North Wales, where it forms the buttresses upon which mighty Snowdon rests, and at St Davids in Pembrokeshire, and Bray-head in Ireland, where the *Oldhamia antiqua*, with one or two other varieties, was found; while in Canada the same rocks are more extensively displayed, though they all agree with each other in the scarcity of fossil remains. But we must not linger too long on the Longmynd, for the president has warned us that dinner is to be at four o'clock, and we have yet a considerable tract of country to explore. The hills opposite to us are to the full as picturesque, though different in appearance—being ragged and pointed, while the Longmynd has square, truncated edges. With the change in appearance, too, we turn over a new leaf in the earth's history—a leaf, like the last, representing a vast series of time, yet unlike the last, affording very many remains of organic life. But as many of my readers doubtless know, it is very seldom that we find geological series of rocks invariably succeeding each other in their proper order; there is generally a hiatus or gap where one portion is missing, and so it is in this Church Stretton valley. Between the Longmynd and Caradoc ranges opposite, there is a gap, caused by a great fault or dislocation of the strata, the consequence of which is that we miss one or two divisions of the Lower Silurian formation, which we might otherwise have expected to find there. However, although the lost strata are too far off to visit in one day's excursion, we must just say a few words about them, to shew how the scantily inhabited seas of the first life-world gradually became more thickly peopled. The first of these subdivisions will be met with on the other side the Longmynd, at the picturesque escarpment of the Stiper Stones which overlooks the lovely scenery of Bishop's Castle and Montgomery. Here we may really get something in return for all our hammering, and in particular a small bivalve shell called a *Lingula*, which is so characteristic of these rocks, that they are known to geologists as the Lingula flags. This early shell is simple enough; but the peculiarity of it is, that it is very horny, and with but little lime in it, shewing that the sea-bottom in which it lived must have been composed of mud or sand, though there is an increase in the amount of lime as compared with the rocks below, an increase which becomes greater as we mount higher in the geologic scale. But there are more than Lingulæ in these beds; a crustacean not very unlike a shrimp has been found and named *Hymenocaris* by Mr Salter, who has stood godfather to two-thirds of these extinct creatures, and thus has an awful lot of hard names to answer for. Then there are *trilobites*, which appear to have been for many ages the most important and characteristic family in the world. The trilobites belonged to the great order of crustacea, of which the lobster and crab of our own day are familiar examples.

As the name implies, the body was generally divided into three lobes by two deep furrows, and was protected by a sort of case composed of numerous rings, but the head was covered by a single piece. They were of all sizes, from eighteen inches long to an almost microscopic size, and the most singular portion of them was the eye, which was very large, and composed of an immense number of facets or lenses, plainly shewing both that the relations of light to the eye and the eye to light were the same then as they are now, and also that the same relative conditions of light prevailed in the Silurian seas and atmosphere. Now, it is in the Lingula flags that we first find trilobites in any numbers, but they are principally represented by two rather diminutive families, christened *Agnostus* and *Olenus;* but in the series of rocks above, known as the Llandeilo flags, they acquire a large size. This is the second leaf of the volume which is missing in the Church Stretton valley. In the days of the Llandeilo flags, the society consisted mainly of trilobites, which attained a very respectable size. The *Ogygia* was rather fat and round, while the *Asaphus* became thin and tapering towards the tail; while one, the *Asaphus caudatus*, ended in a regular spike. There are a great many others, all on Mr Salter's baptismal register; but I have mentioned enough to shew what an important part they played in Silurian life. If the reader happens to be touring at Llandeilo or Builth in South Wales, he can make acquaintance with a large number of them in any quarry in the neighbourhood. We must not omit to mention a rather curious fossil, the *Graptolite*, which is found abundantly to the east of the Stiper Stones—a feather-like zoophyte, obtaining its name from its resemblance to a pen, and represented in our times by the *pennatula*. Now, we will take a rapid survey of the country from the rugged summit of Caer-Caradoc—where the old British king fixed his head-quarters—following, on our way up, a narrow lane, the old Watling Street, in its southerly course from Uriconium (Wroxeter). We are now traversing the next division, called the Caradoc Sandstones, from the hill on which they are so well developed, although we cannot help noticing that other action has been at work here besides that of water. The sandstones do not look like sandstones; and no wonder, for fire has afterwards altered their character to a hard flinty sort of rock. Caer-Caradoc, then, is really a mass of igneous rock, along the eastern slopes of which are found the sandstones considerably changed as they approach the erupted rock. On exploring the other side of the hill, towards the pretty village of Cardington, we find that the fire-agency has died away, and we can obtain a bag of fossils, which are particularly numerous in a quarry at Gretton, where we find a fresh assortment of trilobites peculiar to the Caradoc formation, besides shells and corals in great profusion, which we may mention *en passant* are to be found in beds of the same age on the very summit of Snowdon. This quarry was our grand treasure-house; and great was the triumph when a perfect specimen was disentombed, a triumph which reached its climax when the president, who had an iron hammer as long as a walking-stick, fished out a perfectly new fossil, which is undergoing its christening in Jermyn Street. With minds elevated by our unhoped-for success, we retraced our steps to dinner at Church Stretton, bearing the precious relic with excessive care and veneration—although it was *not* a Palæopyge. After such a walk, I need scarcely say with what gusto the geologists sat down to dinner—how they laid open the successive strata of the pie, and how speedily they caused denudation of the joint, which, by the by, bore traces of igneous action. Verily, are not these things written in the Book of the Woolhope Transactions?

TROUBLES AT SANDSTONE.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER IV.—WINTER EVENINGS.

Some months have passed away. The summer sunshine has given place to December skies and wintery blasts that have wrought the calm waters of the sea into a yeasty flood, and changed the whole aspect of Sandstone. The boats are drawn high up on the beach out of the reach of the angry surf, and the gay pennant that floated in the wind from the tall flagstaff is furled till summer suns return.

Michael Hawser's trade is now in full activity. The rope and sail making business occupies most of the idle hands in Sandstone at this season of the year. But amidst all his worldly occupations—and Michael is engaged from morning till night—he never neglects the first business of his life, the spiritual care of those around him. No matter what may be the demands on his time, Michael finds opportunities to hold his weekly Bible-class and prayer-meeting.

This very night—though he has been working at the rope-yard ever since daylight this morning—he is going to meet his scholars at the chapel, and he hurries over his tea to be there in time.

'Thou art going wi' us, Martha?' he asks, as he rises from the table to change his coat.

'Yes, father. Nell can't go to-night; she's hurt her foot on the stairs to-day.'

'Humph!' muttered Michael, looking not over-well pleased at the announcement. He uttered something to the effect that people should mind better than to sprain themselves on a Thursday; but being pressed for time, the delinquent escaped further reproof.

When they are gone, Ellen Hawser sits listening to their retreating steps with an anxious, excited face. She sits there, listening, long after their footsteps have grown inaudible, and always with the same unquiet air about her. Rising, erelong, she catches sight of her own countenance reflected in a small hand-glass that hangs on the wall. She starts at the unwonted appearance there, turns crimson, and hides her face in her hands. Are they tears that glisten through her fingers?

'I've lied to them, and they believe me!' she mutters. 'Martha, too! to deceive her!'

Alas, Ellen! it is a hard course thou hast entered upon. Lies come not readily to thy lips; thou art a novice at the work of dissimulation.

Standing thus with the unquiet air upon her, and the crimson flush upon her cheek, she has not heard the handle of the door turn, nor the footsteps drawing to her side.

Meanwhile, Michael Hawser, within the walls of the little chapel on the cliff, and by the dim light of tallow-candles, harangues his class to the sound of the waves tumbling hoarsely on the beach below. Hark! he is now chiding one of his scholars—a handsome girl who wears more ribbons than he approves of—for her love of finery and gay clothing.

'Remember, Miriam Clarke, what the Apostle says: Women should adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair nor costly array. A love of fine clothing marked the first step in the downward course of more than one in this fold. Take warning, then, in time, and remember my words.' And the young women bend their heads over their books as they listen to their master's stern voice.

What is it that ails Ellen Hawser to-night, that she is thus wayward and strange, when her father and sister return home? Why, at a tender word from the latter, does she turn away with a quivering lip? Martha hears her sighing in her sleep, and rising from her bed, finds her sister's long hair, lying straggling across the pillow, all wet with her tears.

If any shadow is over his house to-night, Michael Hawser knows it not; he sleeps the just man's quiet sleep, nor dreams there is a thought in his children's hearts that is hidden from him.

Martha is ill again. A cold north wind that has covered the neighbouring downs with snow, and iced all the pools on the shore, has brought on a return of her cough and debility. She does not rise till noon, and sits all day by the hearth, engaged in knitting or reading. Her stock of books has increased of late, for Mr Lennox, ever since that autumn evening he spent at Michael Hawser's cottage, has been a constant visitor, and has kept Martha supplied with books suited to her taste.

He has just looked in, this wintry afternoon, and is standing by the fireside, with the snow thawing on his shaggy overcoat, and his face glowing with exposure to the storm of sleet he has been battling with in a six miles' walk along the windy cliff. Mr Lennox likes Martha's quaint and earnest talk, and, at times, it almost arouses something akin to earnestness in his own wayward breast.

'I wish these things,' he was saying, 'presented themselves in the same light to all minds. To hear you talk, it seems the easiest thing in the world to be consistent and—and all the rest. Why, do you know, I believe I never acted from anything but impulse all my life. Heigh-ho! I think spoiled children and men with small competencies are the most miserable creatures on this earth.'

'Did your parents spoil you?' asked Martha.

'Well, if gratifying every wish as soon as formed, and never thwarting me till I got to an age when I wouldn't stand it, means spoiling, I was most unquestionably spoiled.'

'But all this you're saying, sir,' rejoined Martha, 'strengthens what I began wi'—that a gentleman like you, if he doesn't find any occupation in life lie ready to his hands, ought to make one for himself. You own what I say is right, sir, why not act upon it?'

'Why not do the hundred other things that I know to be right, and that I daily leave undone?' interrupted Mr Lennox. 'Why not be wise and good, like yourself, instead of foolish, and worse than foolish, as I am? No, Martha, the leopard can't change his spots, nor the Ethiopian his skin. You're white, and I'm black; and there's the difference.'

'That's not the way to talk, Mr Lennox, and you know it!' said Martha, with quiet indignation. 'I don't want to hear any more, if you speak i' that way.'

'Well, we won't quarrel to-night. I've come to say good-by for a time. I'm going to London to-morrow.'

Here Ellen, who had been sitting sewing near the window all along, rose and left the room.

'To London?' repeated Martha, in surprise.

'Yes; and where else, I can't say. I have taken rooms at Lynmouth for my return. I shall be back again before long.' And ere many minutes, Mr Lennox took his departure.

It was a long and rigorous winter. January came and went away, and the weather abated not. Frost and snow, with storms of wind that strewed the coast with foam, and brought many a sad token of wreck and disaster to shore, continued.

How the tempest bellowed at night in the cottage chimneys at Sandstone; and when morning broke, how wrathful looked the sea with the storm-birds blown aslant across the serried waves! Martha Hawser, sitting by the fireside in the long winter evenings, or lying sleepless in the longer nights, often thought of the sailors out there in peril and darkness, and put up many a prayer for their souls.

It was a hard season for the poor of Sandstone. Many a time would Widow Watson and her children have wanted fire and food, but for Jim Bowes. Every time the old sailor drew cash from his savings-bank—Captain Linders acted in that capacity, and doled out his weekly stipend every Saturday night, for Jim Bowes was but a poor economist, and would have made ducks and drakes of his earnings in no time—every time the old sailor drew his stipend, he made over, either directly or indirectly, some portion of it to the widow and her children. Moreover, he had got the eldest boy an appointment under the patronage of Mrs Fisk; and Jack Watson, rubbing away at the knife-board at Prospect Cottage, already aspired after the honours of pagehood, and dreamed nightly of bright buttons. Susan, meanwhile, earned a few shillings by making coarse shirts for a slop-shop at Lynmouth, and, outcast as she was, felt her life brightened and assuaged by the old sailor's care and sympathy.

Mr Lennox had not yet returned to the neighbourhood. There were rumours abroad that he had come back again to Lynmouth, and even that he had been seen one evening near the chapel-gate at Sandstone; but as the report only rested on the authority of Billy Winn, no one gave much heed to it. Michael Hawser, however, could have corroborated it; at least, he had seen, a night or two ago, a figure that bore a close resemblance to Mr Lennox, hovering near the old hawthorn at the chapel-yard gate. But it was growing dusk, and Michael might have been deceived; so he kept his own counsel, and said nothing about it.

A circumstance, however, occurred erelong, that proved the report was less apocryphal than was generally supposed. Billy Winn had been sent over to Lynmouth, by one of the workmen at the rope-yard, on some errand that required legs but not brains for its performance. Coming up to Michael for the promised reward, that guardian of the morals of Sandstone bethought him of the report that Billy Winn had set afloat, and resolved to question him thereon.

'How came you to say you'd seen Mr Lennox in the neighbourhood, eh?' sternly inquired the censor. 'Mind you tell me no lies.'

'I see'd him, I did,' said Billy, rolling round his eyes and his head, like a puppet when the string is pulled.

'No, you didn't, and you know it,' said Michael more sternly than before.

'He gie me it, he did,' persisted the idiot, rolling his eyes and his head as before.

'Gave you what?' asked Michael.

'I knows. It's mine; it ain't yourn. They all wants it;' and the lad fumbled something in his pocket, with a jealous look.

It was a bright shilling, which Billy, on Michael's assurance that no ill play was intended, displayed with a queer mixture of cunning and imbecility.

Mr Lennox, then, was, or had been in the neighbourhood, and the truth of Billy Winn's story stood established.

CHAPTER V.—A NIGHT-WATCH.

'Then you've done, have you, Mrs Finner?'

'Yes, Mr Hawser; I've swep' the chapel well, and made all neat and tidy, I think.'

'You've minded to clean the lamp-glasses in the pulpit, eh?'

'Yes, sir. Likewise to beat the cushion and shake the mats. It's surprisin', Mr Hawser, what a sight o' cleanin' the chapel do take. I've been five hours at it, if I've been five minutes. But we're all clean now, I *can* say;' and old Mrs Finner, releasing her gown, that had been pinned up for the better dispatch of work, looked round her with complacency.

Viewed by the light of the solitary dip that was flickering and guttering in a brass candlestick, the little chapel looked melancholy enough. Its bare white walls, striped with long, dismal windows; its rows of ugly benches, and its meagre pulpit, keeping guard over them, had a cold and barren air. With the winter wind rattling the slates overhead, and thundering at the walls, as though resolved to beat an entrance there, or carry the whole chapel over the cliff and out to sea, it inspired anything but cheerfulness of spirits.

'I want us to be all in proper order to-morrow, Mrs Finner,' said Michael to the chapel-cleaner. 'It's anniversary-night, and we've prayers and a discourse from the Lynmouth minister. You'll be here, I hope, and old John, too?'

'If we live till to-morrow night, we'll be here, sir,' said Mrs Finner, piously.

'Well, then, as all's done, Mrs Finner, we'll say good-night. Here's your money, marm.' Michael placed a shilling in the old lady's hand, and took up the candle, whilst she put on her bonnet.' I'll see to the locking-up to-night. Here's your shawl, marm; good-night.'

'You knows where the keys is hung, Mr Hawser, and the lucifers put, and the candle-box, and'——

'Yes, yes. I'll see that all's right. Good-night, good-night;' and Michael hurried away the old lady, who was evidently burning to know what this infringement on her duties might mean.

When Mrs Finner had retired, Michael blew out the light, placed the candlestick on the bench again, and sat down in the dark. He seemed to be listening for something; but what with the rattling of the slates on the roof, and the din of the wind that shook every pane of glass in the windows, it was impossible to hear anything. He got up, and groped his way to the porch. The night was dark, with clouds flying fast, and the stars glimmering momentarily between. But it was not to watch the flying clouds that Michael Hawser stood there. Passing by the hawthorn at the gate this morning at daybreak, he had witnessed a mysterious proceeding that he was determined to know the meaning of. He had seen a man glide out from under the shadow of the old hawthorn-tree, and, with a bound over the chapel-yard wall, take to rapid flight. Going up to the spot, he had found a letter inserted in the hollow trunk of the tree. It bore neither signature nor address, and contained only a few lines; those lines, however, had revealed to him that there was a secret correspondence going on between the writer and some person in the village, unknown. The penmanship and style of the letter were clearly superior to the epistolary productions of Sandstone; there could be little doubt as to the quarter it came from. But for whom was it intended? Who was the abandoned girl who had so far forgotten her duty? It was to find out this that Michael Hawser stood watching in the chapel porch this windy night.

He had not waited many minutes ere he saw, or fancied he saw—for the night is so dark, and the old hawthorn is so tossed about by the wind, that it is difficult to tell shadow from substance—a figure stealing along by the wall that enclosed the chapel ground. A sudden gust of wind, darting viciously into the porch at that moment, carried off his hat, and when Michael had regained it—it was a slow operation, what with the wind, and the darkness, and the graves—the figure had disappeared. At first, Michael thought he had been cheated by his fancy; but on going up to the tree, he felt something in the grass under his feet, and stooping down, picked up what seemed to him, from its cold metallic touch, like a knife. Some one had been there, then! Michael was not long in searching for other evidences of their visit. He put his hand into the cloven trunk of the tree, and drew forth a letter. Returning to the porch, he entered the chapel, and struck a light. The matches were damp, but at length a blue glimmer played on his face. As the flame arose, the knife in his hand sparkled brilliantly; he looked, and behold it was the Cairo dagger he held!

Here was a confirmation of a part of his suspicions; it was Mr Lennox who was the wolf roaming round the fold. Knitting his brows, and muttering condemnation, Michael put down the light, and opened the letter. His face darkened as he read.

'What! has it gone thus far?' he muttered. 'Does he bid her leave her friends? Who can he ha' got such power over as to write like this?'

He stood there, musing before the long-wicked candle, with a gigantic shadow looming on the wall behind him, and moving as he moved with wrathful gestures.

'Who can it be?' repeated Michael, and he passed in review all the scholars of his class, and all the young women of the village. But there was not one amongst them on whom he could fix his suspicions. Stay! there was Miriam Clarke, the wearer of gay ribbons. Had he not already rebuked her for vanity and a love of finery? These were bad symptoms. She was accounted pretty too, and he had heard Mr Lennox admire her more than once. Then, too, her father was not a chapel-goer, and there were strange tales about her sister. The more Michael thought about it, the more convinced he felt that Miriam was the offender. 'I'll get to know who this was written to, if I stay here all night,' said Michael to himself; and blowing out the light once more, he strode away to the hawthorn-tree, and restored the letter to its hiding-place. That done, he took up his station in the dark porch, resolved to find out into whose hands the letter fell, even if he stayed till morning.

Some time passed away, and no one came. The clock on the roof sang out the hours to the windy night more than once, and still the letter remained undisturbed.

Was it a dog that had suddenly leaped over the wall? Something was moving there under the tree. Michael hastened to the spot, and stumbled over a figure crouching in the shade. There was a cry of terror, and then the figure writhed itself dexterously from his grasp, and took to flight. In that wild cry Michael recognised the voice of Billy Winn, and instantly set chase. But he was too late. The idiot boy ran as though he had seen a ghost—indeed he probably thought he had—and, favoured by the darkness, was soon out of reach of his pursuer. Michael gave up the chase, and returning to the tree, found, as he expected, that the letter had disappeared.

To extract a confession from the half-witted lad, who possessed all the imperturbable cunning of a weak intellect, would be a hopeless task. But Michael

Hawser had discovered enough; he knew that an offender existed amongst his congregation; and whoever might be the guilty person, he determined that, ere four-and-twenty hours, she should be publicly put to shame, and her disgrace proclaimed throughout the village.

CHAPTER VI.—THE SISTERS.

How blank the morning broke over Sandstone next day, with a leaden sky overhead, and the rain falling heavily into a leaden sea! How sullenly the breakers—swollen by the last night's wind—roared along the shore!

Looking out seawards from her chamber-windows at dawn, Martha Hawser's spirit sank, and she longed for night to shut out the cheerless day. She had awaked with a strange sense of misery upon her, and her prayers had been distracted by vague fears. She went down to her duties weary and troubled, she knew not why. These same duties were light enough now, alas! Martha rarely quitted her seat by the fireside. Her cough grew worse, and her strength less every day. She could no longer keep her father's books, as she used to do, but had been obliged to resign the pen into her sister's hands. Ellen made a better nurse than accountant. She waited on Martha with growing tenderness and devotion. If the latter sometimes thought her sister's cheerfulness diminished, or her temper more wayward than formerly, she never saw shadow of change in Ellen's affection, or found her love less keen and watchful than of old.

Hour after hour, the leaden clouds rained down into the leaden sea. The dull day closed in at length, and the sail-maker's table lay ready spread for tea.

'Martha,' said Ellen, 'I've made all ready for father, and the kettle's boiling. My head's bad to-night; I'll go and lie me down awhile.'

She stood staring at the fire as she spoke, twining and untwining her fingers, with a restless, moody air.

'You'll be ready by chapel-time, Ellen? Father won't like to wait to-night.'

Ellen nodded her head, and stood and gazed at the fire as before.

'Martha,' she broke out suddenly, 'let me have a lock o' your hair!'

'My hair, Ellen? Ay, to-morrow—to-morrow, bairn. Go and lie down now. Drink this cup o' tea first. You look ill to-night.'

'I *am* ill—very ill!' said the girl slowly, taking no notice of the outstretched cup.

'Ellen, Ellen! what are you saying?' cried Martha, rising from her chair with a frightened face.

'I? Nothing, nothing! O Martha!' She turned deadly white, and seemed about to faint; then subduing herself with a great effort, she exclaimed: 'Ah, ah! I only tried to frighten you, Martha;' and she laughed unnaturally.

'O Ellen, you *are* ill! What is it? Tell me.' Martha put her arm round her sister.

'It's this, dear heart: I want a lock o' your hair; that'll cure me;' and, as she spoke, she cut off a curl with her scissors, and ran swiftly from the room.

'Where's Ellen? Ain't she ready yet?' asked Michael Hawser of his daughter, as he sat down to tea soon after.

'She's lying down a bit, father. She don't seem well to-night; but she'll be ready when you are.'

Not long after, Michael donned his Sunday clothes, and stood arrayed for chapel.

'Now, Ellen, I'm ready,' he cried, at the foot of the narrow staircase.

'She be gone ten minutes ago, maister,' said Kezia, issuing from the kitchen. 'I see her come down stairs, and go out front way. You'll find her at chapel, or fall in wi' her on the road.'

'Your sister's gone on first,' said Michael, returning to the little parlour. 'I must be off too; I've got work to do to-night as mustn't be delayed.'

Michael spoke so seriously that Martha raised her head to look at him: the lines about his face were harder, and his lips more tightly compressed than usual.

'Listen, Martha,' he said; and in a few words he told her of what had taken place the night before, and of the resolution he had formed.

'O father! I thought better on him. Are you sure it's he?' Her lips trembled, and her eyes filled with tears as she spoke.

'I'm sure as I stand here,' replied Michael.

'But ain't there any other way of ending this sin? Can't you save the girl wi'out the—the shame and'——

'No,' said Michael; 'it's no more than she deserves. Miriam Clarke's had warnin' before this. The Lord knows I'd do the same by my own.'

He said no more, but bade his daughter good-night, and left the house.

Why did not thy good angel stand in the threshold, Michael, and bar the way with flaming sword? Better for thee to have fallen dead at thy own door-post, than gone a step further to-night.

Martha sat and sewed by the fireside with a heavy heart. It was hard to think evil of that frank and generous stranger. In vain she tried to hope her father might be mistaken. Her needle lagged, her work fell from her fingers, and she sat gazing at the fire with tears stealing down her face.

'Poor Miriam!' she murmured; and Martha sighed as she thought of the stern judge in whose hands her secret rested.

The Dutch clock in the corner ticked drearily; the wind soughed mournfully round the eaves; and without, the rain fell ceaselessly into the sea.

The clock struck nine at length, and Martha laid aside her work. 'I'll read a chapter,' said the girl; and she rose and fetched her Bible, that lay on the top of the drawers at hand. Martha never went to rest with this duty unperformed.

She took her seat again by the hearth, and opened the book; as she did so, something fluttered down from the open leaves. She stooped down—it was a letter, addressed, 'Martha.' Wondering what it might mean, she opened it, and read—— No! Martha could not read—could not see; the paper had turned blood-red before her eyes, and the whole room gone dark in a moment. It passed, and then the sense, the terrible sense of the words she gazed at, burned itself slowly into her brain.

The letter was as follows:

'When you open your Bible to-night, and read this, Martha, it will be done; the deceit and acting will be ended, and you'll know me for what I am. I could cut off the hand that writes these words! O Martha, if you knew how I—— When you read the chapter to-night, I shall be gone far away. You must break it to—to him. I know what to expect. I don't bid you remember me, or love me; I'm not worthy to be child of his, nor sister to such as you. Martha, he can't despise me worse than I despise myself; he can't be harder in his judgment than I am in mine. I know what I forfeit, though my trust in him at whose bidding I leave you is greater than words o' mine could tell. Had he called me across the world, I must have followed. Darling! sister! farewell. O Martha, I'll think on you till the last minute I live!'

When Martha had read to the last line, her cheeks grew bloodless, and she fell back in her chair with a deathlike face. But even in this suspension of her faculties, she never lost consciousness for a moment; her eyes sought something all the time, as they wandered round the room. What was it her father had said? Where was her shawl? She must be gone, this very instant! ay, though her limbs were weak and feeble, and she had not crossed the threshold for many weeks. She rose, snatched up the shawl that lay near, and, regardless of the cold and the falling rain, ran swiftly out into the dark night. Her first thought, her first instinct, was to warn her father, ere he had carried out his purpose, and revealed, with his own lips, the shame and dishonour that had fallen upon his house.

A NEW FRIEND IN AN OLD PLACE.

If a laurel-crown should be awarded, as some say, to him who, in these days, travels, and makes no sign of having done so in printers' ink, surely some guerdon is due to that still rarer tourist who writes, and yet writes well; since it is not travels *per se* that we speak evil of (as Mr Kingsley said of Dignities), but the way in which travels are told. A welcome, then, of five-thousand-copies power to this broth of a boy, who, out of that squeezed orange, Ireland, can press such pleasant extract as this *Little Tour.** He travels in the footsteps of the gigantic Titmarsh, and yet knows, and needs to know, no fear. The political authorities referred to by the young Oxonian are not, indeed, of a very powerful character, being acknowledged in these degenerate days scarce out of the Sheldonian Theatre, and his somewhat frequent classical quotations have a very recent smack of the lecture-room about them; but the youth of our author is proclaimed in another and more agreeable fashion, by the impulsive heart and tearing spirits which seldom survive the period of undergraduateship—that glorious epoch of existence when 'friends are many and foes are none,' and there is no legal remedy for one's tailor. Never, surely, did book exhibit less evidence of the professional bookmaker than this exhilarating volume. Conceive an author bound for Ireland, not to redress its grievances, not to expose its shortcomings, not for any pompously stated reasons whatsoever, nor, indeed, for any reason at all, but merely because a young lady had rejected him at a picnic-party; and we must confess we think she had very bad taste.

'I sang songs for the company, not quite reaching the high notes, but with intense feeling, doing all in my power to indicate to the lovely girl that she was *my* Annie Laurie. I made felicitous alterations in the words, such as, "hazel is her e'e" for "dark blue;" and in the song of *Constance*, instead of "I lay it as the rose is laid on some immortal shrine," I contrived, with immense difficulty, and by means of a terrific appoggiatura, to substitute the word stephanotis, of which I had that morning given her a bouquet. But "brevis esse laboro:" we were alone, and I resolved to propose. I seized her elbow with both hands—a ridiculous position, but I was very nervous—and was about to ask the momentous question, when she said with such a tone of gentle pity as took away half the pain: "Philip, I am engaged to Lord Evelyn. Shall we go back for coffee?" I seconded the motion; but oh, what an amazing period of time we seemed to occupy in carrying our proposition out! The first idea which presented itself to my mind was suicide, but it met with an unfavourable reception; the second, to enlist immediately, and to secure the earliest *coup de soleil* possible; the third, to insult Lord Evelyn (the *beast* was at Christchurch, and I knew him), and subsequently to shoot him in Port Meadow. "What right had he," I asked myself, "to anticipate me, and win her heart? I hate these accursed aristocrats, who suck the life-blood of the people."' Here follows one of Mr Leech's admirable portraits of the 'accursed aristocrat,' a simple swell sucking nothing but the end of his cigar. From that dire moment, our hero put himself into active training, in order to get himself into the best possible condition for doing justice to Ireland.

'I read Moore's Melodies; I played *Nora Creina* upon the flute, not perhaps with that rapidity which is usual outside the peep-shows, but with much more expression; I discoursed with reapers; I tried to pronounce Drogheda till I was nearly black in the face; I drank whisky-punch (subsequently discovered to be Hollands); I ate Irish stew (a dish never heard of in that country); and I bought the sweetest thing in portmanteaus, with drawers, trays, pockets, compartments, recesses, straps, and buckles, more than enough to drive that traveller mad who should forget where he had placed his razors.' He had an unusually smooth passage across the western channel, there being only one lady on board who succumbed to the elements—'the captain very properly put a young man in irons for saying something about no Cyc-lades in these seas'—and she, it appeared, 'only wanted sympathy and sherry from her husband, who was evidently a recent capture, and who administered both these cordials in due proportions—first, a sip, and then a kiss,' when he thought that no one was looking. The light of Ireland's Eye ('bright and clear though there must have been a stye *there*') soon blinked bonnily on our hero and his friend Frank—who is only less pleasant and good-humoured than himself—and that happy pair found themselves in Dublin.

They were so fortunate as to reach the Portobello Gardens that evening just in time to witness the siege and capture of Delhi. 'We had both of us formed most erroneous impressions on the subject, and it was a grand opportunity for ascertaining truth. If the representation was correct, and there seems no reason to mistrust it, as "no expense had been spared," it is high time for the English people to be told that the accounts which have appeared in their newspapers (the graphic glowing descriptions of Mr William Russell inclusive) are wickedly and superlatively false!

'The city of Delhi is constructed of painted wood, and does not exceed in dimensions a respectable modern residence. Before it there is a pool of water. The siege commenced with a tune on the key-bugle, and with an appropriate illumination of Bengal lights, which extended over the entire scene of war, and was got up, as we supposed, at the joint expense of the combatants. Then the Anglo-Indian army, which had taken up a perilous position about four yards from the city, led off with a Roman candle, and the rebels promptly replied with a maroon. The exasperated besiegers now went in, or rather went a long way over, with rockets—the sepoys, with undaunted courage, defying them with blue-lights and crackers. For a time the battle was waged with extraordinary spirit, steel filings, &c.; but, finally, the "awful explosion of the magazine," admirably rendered by a "Jack-in-a-box," threw the rebels into sad distress; and they came running (all six of them) from the city, trying the old dodge to give an idea of multitude by rushing in at one door and rushing out at another. The British soldiers, conversant with this manœuvre, which they had so often witnessed at Mr Batty's Hippodrome, immediately charged into the devoted city, lit a red-light, and all was over. The total silence which immediately ensued within the walls impressively told the annihilation of the vanquished, and the great fatigue (or, alas! it might be the abject intoxication) of the victors, reminding one forcibly of the school-boy's description in Latin of the termination of a siege—"Dein victores, urbe captâ, sicut pisces bibunt, et, parvula, si ulla, illis culpa, nullum bestiarum finem ex seipsis faciunt."

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* *A Little Tour in Ireland.* By an Oxonian. With Illustrations by John Leech. Bradbury and Evans.

'Frank said it was Delhicious! And to this atrocity, as well as to His Excellency's absence from Dublin, I attribute the melancholy fact that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland never called upon us.'

Similarly, whatever these well-matched companions met with in Ireland, they always made the best of it; and when nothing good could be distilled, even in *their* alembic of good-nature, they made fun of it.

The sun shines out upon every page in the volume—except for the summer showers of pathos and the sheet-lightnings of youthful indignation, both welcome in their way—and even their method of repressing vulgarity has a certain racy humour in it.

'The next morning, at breakfast, a Scotch gentleman, with an amazing accent, would read the newspaper in such loud tones to his friend, that, not being monks, nor accustomed to be read to, *more monastico*, at our meals, we really could not enjoy our food, and were compelled to toss up which of us should recite to the other the list of bankrupts from the *Times*. I lost; but had not progressed far in my distinct enunciation of the unhappy insolvents when the Caledonian took the hint, and we ate our mackerel in peace.'

Of the Ladies, our author, notwithstanding his disappointment, is a great admirer, and takes it very much to heart that he meets with so little reciprocity from the Irish fair sex.

'The women are, for the most part, good looking, erect and graceful movers—for there are no corns in Connaught—and, from the bright colours of their costume, the red petticoats and blue cloaks are ever a pleasant refreshment to the eye, and picturesque addition to the scene. They are uniformly and painfully shy. Francis and I are both of us what may be termed remarkably handsome men, but they wouldn't look at us; and I shall never forget the agony of a young housemaid, who, assisting the waiter one morning with a tub of water to my room, caught sight of my dressing-gown through the open door, and instantly, though the garment is of a pleasing pattern, and descends quite to the ground, rushed off—like Dorothea from Cardenio and his companions—and, I verily believe, is running now. As regards children—there are crosses in Ireland which are saluted by wives who would be mothers also, and these crosses, or something equally efficacious, appear to be universally embraced. Every cottage sent forth a running accompaniment (allegro) to the ear, from healthful, cheery children, who would be beautiful, in spite of their wretched homes and meagre diet, and rags, if their mothers could be induced to recognise the utility of soap and a comb. The raiment is very scant and curious. Ould Larry's coat, with the tails cut off, makes young Larry "an entire juvenile suit;" and the inexpressibles of Phelim *père* form a noble panoply for Phelim *fils*, with his little arms thrust through the pocket-holes. A few professional beggars come round when there is a change of horses—excellent horses they are—but are neither so frequent nor so importunate as we had been led to expect. One old lady had evidently got the last new thing in begging—a letter to her "poor darlint boy as was gone to Merriky, and would ye bestow a thrifle, good gintlemen, to pay the bit o' postage; God bless yer bewtifle young faces." Of course we would, every mother's son of us. What an affectionate, exemplary parent! When we returned, a few days afterwards, she was again in correspondence with her beloved son, far away from her yearning tenderness, beyond the broad Atlantic; and, indeed, I have reason to believe, from information which I gathered from the driver and our fellow-passengers, that this disconsolate mother writes to her exile-child every day, except Sundays.'

'*Old* Frank,' as our author calls his companion, with that affectionate freedom peculiar to the period of Youth, and which would be resented irascibly enough if Frank were over thirty, goes out fishing in Kylemore Lake with triumphant success, and after disembarking, 'settles' with the boatman thus:

"Boatman!" quoth the illustrious fisherman, "how much is the boat?"

"Sure, your 'onour, the boat 'll be in the bill. Your 'onour 'll give the boatman what you please."

"But what is generally given?"

"Well, your 'onour, some 'll give two shillings, and some eighteen pince. *A tailor'd be for giving eighteen pince.*"'

We are told, and we can easily believe it, that Frank's gratuity exceeded in munificence that of a whole street of tailors. He is, indeed, rather careless as to expenditure, and in particular is prepared to give almost any money for a live eagle, if such a *rara avis* can be procured. Our author, therefore, who is a tolerable polyphonist, rises early one morning at Killarney, and, knocking at his friend's chamber-door, imitates the accents of the hotel Boots. The drama is in two acts.

'ACT I.

'*The scene, like the hero, is laid in bed. The room is strewed with wearing-apparel in great disorder. The appearance of the candle suggests the probability of its having been extinguished by a blow from a clothes-brush. Soft music from the Somnambula, which changes to "Who's dat knocking at the door?"*

'*Frank* (*awaking*). Who's there?

'*Boots*. Sure, yer 'onour, it's Boots.

'*F.* Well, what do you want?

'*B.* Plaze, yer 'onour, man's brought yer a hagle.

'*F.* Who sent him? How much does he want for it?

'*B.* Miles, yer 'onour—Miles the guide. The man 'll take tin shillings, yer 'onour; and he's an illigant hagle, with a power o' bake.

'*F.* Tell him I'll have it, and let him wait till I come down.

'*B.* I will, yer 'onour.

Curtain
(pulled aside by Frank, to facilitate conversation)
Falls.

'*Interval of half an hour, during which I go to bed in high spirits, and Frank dreams that the Zoological Society have offered him a hundred for his new purchase.*

ACT II.

Scene as before.

'*F.* (*aroused by renewed knocking*). Now, then! what the deuce is up?

'*B.* There's another man, yer 'onour, wants to sell you a hagle.

'*F.* Oh, hang it! tell him I've got one, and ask the gentleman in No. 20 whether he would like to buy it.

'*B.* I will, yer 'onour.

* * * *

'*B.* (*returning after a putative interview with No. 20*). Plaze, yer 'onour, the gintleman's bin and bought him, and I was to give his best love to yer 'onour, and his hagle's waiting in the passage, to fight yer 'onour's hagle for a new hat.'

During the last sentence, our hero's voice returns to its natural tone, and the suspicious Frank is up in an instant, boot in hand, and hurls that missile by mistake at an elderly clergyman. With this exception, the behaviour and opinions of the two young gentlemen are orthodox enough, although they cannot refuse the meed of approbation to a certain Irish Papist, who, after a theological argument with them the preceding evening, calls out to them from his bedroom window as they are departing, 'to give his love to the Bishop of London, and ask him what he fancied for the Chester Cup.'

Here is a little treatise on words which will be new to the ordinary etymologist:

'There are words which, although unnoticed in the delightful treatises of the Dean of Westminster (may his fame increase!), have a strong, strange power upon the heart—words which can ring for us, listening by the brook-side, and in arbours and meadow-haunts once more, the joy-bells of a former mirth, or toll above past sorrows and buried hopes their muffled and mournful peal. Breathes there, for instance, a man with soul so dead, who can hear of a primrose-bank, or a cowslip ball, or a rolly-polly pudding, or a sillabub, or a soap-bubble, or a pantomime, or of Robinson Crusoe, and not feel himself, though it be but for a moment, a happy child again? And do we not realise, on the other hand, in all their brief intensity, our earliest sorrows, when memory suggests to us those solemn sounds of woe—measles, big-brother, ghosts, dentists, castor-oil?'

What our author wishes to arrive at is, that, similarly, the word *Killarney* will be to him a joy for ever. Certainly, he seems to have appreciated it, and most cordially do we wish that we had been with him. What proper contempt he has for that sort of admiration which confines itself to praising the absent at the expense of the present!

'As for comparing Killarney with Derwentwater, as the fashion is, it ever appears to me the most ungrateful folly to depreciate or to extol one scene of beauty by commending or condemning another; and when a man begins with, "Ah, but you should see so-and-so," or, "I assure you, my dear fellow, this is dreadfully inferior to what-d'-ye-call-it," I always most heartily wish him at the locality which he affects to admire. What nasty, niggardly, uncomfortable minds there are in this bilious world! How many men, who, forgetting that excellent round-hand copy, "Comparisons are odious," are never happy but in detecting infelicities, and only strong when carping at weaknesses. Shew them a pretty girl, "She wants animation," or, "She wants repose;" "She is overdressed," or, "Her clothes, poor thing, must have been made in the village, and put on with a fork." "You should see the youngest Miss Thingembob." Tell them of a good day's covert-shooting you have had in my lord's preserves; out comes a note from their friend the duke, who has beaten you by sixteen wood-cocks. Trot out your new hunter, and, "O yes, he's a nice little horse, but will never carry *you* with those forelegs. You must come over and look at an animal I've just got down from Tattersall's by Snarler out of a Humbug mare, and well up to twenty stone, sir."'

Our lively young friend, who is *blasé* with nothing, and brings an ear for everything as well as an eye, finds something new to say even about hotel bells.

'There is ever in these large hotels some unhappy inmate who is unable to put himself into communication with Boots, who rings his bell with an ever-increasing energy, until he performs, at last, in his wild fury, such a continuous peal as must bring up somebody, or bring down the rope. It is interesting to listen to these bells. First, they suggest, then they entreat, then they remonstrate, then they insist, and then they curse and swear! Like the music of the overture to *Guillaume Tell*, they begin pleasantly and peacefully, then they grow grand and warlike, crescendoing from andante pianissimo until they arrive at allegro fortissimo; and reminding me of a village dame whom I heard calling from her cottage door to a child, playing in the distance, and hearing but not heeding its mother:

"Lizzie, luv!"
"Liz—a—Buth!"
"E—Liz—er—Buth!"
"Bess, you young Hussie!"'

That the young Oxonian should be a believer in the Blarney Stone, is only what we had expected of him, and should have been disappointed if we had not found; but we scarcely think him justified in believing, as he does, that everybody else believes. Driving back from this altar of superstition, and getting communicative as usual with his charioteer, our author obtains from him much pleasant anecdote, personal and otherwise. Of most of them we can only observe what the Oxonian's own French master remarked at school to a young gentleman named Drake: '*Monsieur Canard, I shall not call you a liar, but I do not believe von vord of vot you say;*' and we are much afraid that the same observation must be applied to this amusing origin of the name Macgillicuddy's Reeks, with which most tremendous falsehood we are compelled to conclude this very pleasant volume.

'Mr Macgillicuddy, a gentleman of extensive estates in this neighbourhood, went to visit some friends in England, and took with him an Irish servant, more prone to patriotism than truth. Whatever he saw among the Saxons was just nothing at all, at all to what might be seen in Ireland. In short, he would have been a most appropriate attendant upon that Hibernian who, being asked why he wept at sight of Greenwich Hospital, replied with sorrowful emotion: "Ah, sure, the buildings there remind me of mee dear father's stables!"

'Now it befell that the English gentleman, possessing a large extent of rich meadow-land, took especial delight in his haystacks; and his valet, sympathising with his master's vanity (as all good valets should), soon led the Irishman to look at the stack-yard, expecting to see him mightily astonished; but Paddy, having gazed around with the most sublime indifference, coolly said:

"It's a nice bit o' grass you've brought home here for present use; now let us have a peep at the ricks."

"Ricks!" exclaimed the Englishman, "why, these be they."

"Well, then," says Paddy, "I'll just tell ye; there's about enough hay in this stack-yard to make the bands for thatching my master's ricks. Happen"—this he added as though he wished to be liberal, and to pay his companion a compliment—"there might be a couple of yards or so to spare."

'You may imagine that when, in the following year, the English valet came with his master to return the visit at Killarney, he was not long before he requested his Irish friend to favour him with a view of the haystacks. To be sure he would, with all the pleasure in life; and sorry he was to be prevented by circumstances—over which, he might have added, he had every control—from making the inspection before evening. Accordingly, in the dusk and gloom of twilight, he took the Englishman forth and shewed him, dim in the distance, this lofty mountain-range. "There are *our* ricks!" said he. In that belief the astonished stranger slept; and ever since that time men call these hills Macgillicuddy's Reeks!'

The gifted author of *A Little Tour in Ireland*—gifted, indeed, since he has kindliness, richest humour, and his delightful friend *Old* Frank—need not fear, as he modestly appears to do, the lash of criticism. The man who could be 'caustic' upon such a volume would grope for motes in a sunbeam, and shew himself perhaps a critic, but indisputably a fool.

HOW I GOT MY MICROSCOPE.

So many biographies are written to shew the struggles of genius with adverse circumstances, that a passage from my own may not be out of place in the present egotistical age.

Some six years ago, I had the misfortune to fall into a nervous, irritable state of health, produced, I believe, by having too much spare time, and no congenial pursuit to fill it up with. My mind was like a mill in active condition, destitute of corn, which, by excessive friction, quickly reduces itself to ashes. At this critical period, I one day found myself in the shop of a working optician. I have some vague notion that I went there to purchase some electrical apparatus, but finding it too expensive for my scanty means, was about to retire, when the optician, not willing to lose the chance of a customer, placed before me a small upright microscope—one of those ranging in price from fifteen shillings to a guinea. I had never before seen such an instrument. As one eye glanced along the mystic tube, the other, by an attentive observer, might have been seen gradually enlarging itself until it had attained the expression of wonder and astonishment. It was a very common object, too, that met my gaze, and one that the best regulated families cannot wholly exclude from their bedrooms. I immediately emptied the contents of my purse on the counter, and walked out of the shop the happy possessor of an instrument capable of affording me endless instruction and amusement. Like a child pleased with a new toy, I was never tired of contemplating my treasure. Everything that came in my way, however common it might be, was greedily pounced on, and submitted to the scrutinising powers of my microscope. My delight was unbounded, as from time to time some new feature in the structure of an object was revealed to me.

The following are a few of the simple things which at that time afforded me great delight: Fine sewing needles, which appeared more like thick hedge-stakes than beautiful specimens of the cutler's skill; common thread, which assumed the coarseness and dimensions of a ship's cable; loaf-sugar was a beautiful object, with its glittering angles of crystallisation; writing-paper of various kinds clearly revealed its rag origin by its coarse, blanket-like texture; flax, cotton, silk, feathers, and hundreds of objects were continually presenting themselves to my notice; even the mould from a pair of old shoes was pressed into the service, and made to yield up its amount of interest. Small living objects, however, gave me the greatest pleasure, for not only could all their movements be readily observed, but even the circulation of the blood and the distribution of the nerves in such as were sufficiently transparent. One of the quickest and pleasantest hours I ever remember, was spent in watching a colony of mites, as they struggled and sprawled over each other, in their endeavours to extricate themselves from minute particles of double Gloucester, which pertinaciously adhered to the long projecting hairs of their bodies.

I have heard with surprise something akin to sorrow of young persons purchasing a microscope and throwing it on one side as of no further use, after they had examined the few prepared specimens usually supplied with the instrument. To me, nature appeared inexhaustible, and life far too short to make much progress in the lore she taught. Occasionally I found some organisms so minute, that the powers at my command failed to amplify them sufficiently for examination. My ingenuity was somewhat taxed to supply this deficiency. After a few unsuccessful experiments, I succeeded in gaining an accession of magnifying power by combining two or three separate lenses, though not originally constructed with a view to such a combination. This increase of power I found was gained at the expense of clear definition, though by placing a stop between the lenses, the defect to a certain extent was remedied.

I now became desirous of possessing a collection of prepared specimens, that I might exhibit them to my friends, and awaken within their breasts an enthusiasm equal to my own. Those sold by opticians were far too expensive for my purse, so I determined to attempt to prepare them myself. I had no friend at this time who could give me any information how to proceed; so, being left entirely to my own resources, I contrived with a few hints gathered from a small work, which I purchased for a shilling, to produce a few specimens somewhat clumsy in appearance, and by no means well displayed or cleanly put up. But failure did not daunt me, for I had determined to succeed, and as I always carefully noted the causes which prevented success, I was enabled to avoid them in subsequent experiments. Thus might I have gone to the end of my days plodding cheerfully and contentedly on, had not an event occurred which gave a more extensive and ambitious character to my views.

About this time, I received a pressing invitation to visit a relative residing in a quiet agricultural town in Norfolk. During my stay at this place, I was fortunate enough to become acquainted with the parish doctor, a highly cultivated man, and a veteran microscopist; he, moreover, possessed a first-rate microscope, and had a choice collection of objects. The first peep through his instrument made me instantly dissatisfied with my own, and from that moment I resolved to become the possessor of a first-class microscope, or perish in the attempt. The various expressions of wonder and delight which I could not restrain were, I believe, the richest reward the doctor could have had for his kindness. These reached a climax, when the polarising apparatus having been adjusted, I for the first time saw the gorgeous colouring with which every object was decked. From that day, a new era dawned upon me, and whatever success I may have since achieved with the microscope is clearly traceable to what I then saw, and to the excellent advice and encouragement of the worthy doctor.

No sooner had I returned to town, than I resolved myself into a committee of ways and means as to the best and most expeditious mode of raising the wind. I was not in the receipt of a princely salary, nor have I ever known a bookseller's assistant who was. One hundred pounds per annum was the remuneration my services obtained. I had a wife and two children to share this sum with me; all three blest with excellent appetites. Besides this, I had to make what is generally termed a respectable appearance, and to live in a salubrious quarter of the town. My wife regularly received my salary, which was paid to me monthly; out of this she generously allowed me a shilling per day to find myself in dinners and other small extras. On Sundays I dined at home with my family, consequently, on that day, my pay was stopped.

The question with me was how to cut down the expense of eating and drinking. Six shillings a week was a sum small enough, Heaven knows; but a reduction of this was necessary, as being the only way open to me of getting sufficient money for my purpose. Good dining-houses, where men with small incomes may dine well and yet economically, are not numerous in the fashionable west, and I was a denizen of that quarter. Hence it became necessary that I should make a voyage of discovery to find a place where the inward man could be renovated at a moderate cost. I met with several of this description, but in all, the food supplied was of the worst quality. At length I succeeded in finding a house in the neighbourhood of Golden Square, where the charges were extremely small, and yet the provisions were excellent. I now dined for eightpence instead of a shilling. This was a clear gain of two shillings per week, which a further calculation shewed me would be five pounds four shillings per annum. For several weeks my expenditure never exceeded the four shillings; but finding that at this rate of progress it would take about six years to accumulate a sufficient sum, I reduced my expenses to sixpence per day. This was succeeded by a still further reduction, until I dined for threepence-halfpenny. For this sum I procured a good cup of coffee and three slices of bread and butter; and so accustomed did my stomach become to this lenten fare, that I ceased to regard it as a privation. Notwithstanding these retrenchments, the money seemed to accumulate slowly. One night, while revolving in my mind some plan for obtaining quicker results, I conceived the grand idea of dining for one penny, which I believe was suggested to me by having recently read Franklin's Autobiography. The next day, I bought an Abernethy biscuit, and dined in the Park. A bumper of spring-water, obtained from a neighbouring pump, served as a 'modest quencher' to this frugal repast. It being then the middle of an intensely severe winter, dining in the open air was somewhat inconvenient, and a trifle too public. The publicity I became accustomed to, but not the cold; from its severity I suffered a martyrdom. For six weeks I continued this Spartan practice, but it was gradually weakening my system. The first indication of it was made visible to me in the shape of a large carbuncle on my hand; this was followed by a general debility of the frame. I was now compelled to increase my allowance to three biscuits per diem, which I continued during the remainder of the winter. Finding, however, that my strength did not return to me quickly, I eventually went back to sixpence per day, to which I steadily adhered until the end of my probation.

It was my custom, whenever my savings amounted to five pounds, to invest it in one of the numerous savings' banks of the metropolis. I did so, in order to prevent the money from being applied to any other purpose. A great deal of stubborn determination is necessary to keep one's mind for a long time bent in a particular direction. Most of us want rapid results; we are not content to labour patiently for years in the hope of the reward turning up at last. No wonder that time with me seemed to move on leaden wings, or that I, who possessed so little of Job's virtue, became impatient. The tendency of my mind to be continually dwelling upon this one thing rendered it absolutely necessary that I should keep it fully employed. I borrowed several works on the microscope, which I read with avidity; and about this time I purchased Quekett's excellent treatise; from this last work I acquired a considerable amount of information—the history of the microscope from the earliest times; the men who had contributed by their genius to its present perfection; who were the best makers; the construction of the various instruments, and their prices; likewise many valuable hints on the preparation of microscopic objects, which, at a future period, I turned to profitable account. My invariable custom, when passing the shop of an optician, was to spend a few minutes at the window, studying the different parts of the microscopes there displayed, comparing them with what I had previously read. In this way, without possessing a good microscope, I came to understand every part of one, and likewise the merits of the different makers. My visits to these spots were so frequent, and my stay sometimes so prolonged, that my face must have become well known to the inmates, and may possibly have occasioned no small amount of curiosity and suspicion. But there were times when my enthusiasm had cooled down almost to zero, and grim despair seized upon me. At such times, I usually endeavoured to read myself up to an enthusiastic state; or if this failed, which it sometimes did, I paid a visit to the shop of some eminent optician, of whom I would purchase trifling articles, in order to get a sight of one of his first-class instruments. This never failed to restore my drooping spirits, and to revive my hopes. Courage, my boy! Hold out to the end, and one day, to a certainty, you will possess one of those noble instruments; ay, you may even fix the day, which, though distant, will surely arrive. These encouraging remarks I usually addressed to myself in a loud tone, for I always found that the sound of my own voice produced a far greater effect than a mere mental process.

The day, though distant, did at length arrive; my calculations were correct. A sufficient amount—namely, L.30—had been realised and deposited in the bank. Not a soul knew of its existence but myself and the directors. I did not trust even my wife with the secret—the only one, by the by, I ever kept from her—lest her remonstrances should have caused me to desist.

It is a somewhat curious fact, and one which might puzzle even a German metaphysician to elucidate, that having now the power to possess myself of that for which I had so long struggled, I became almost indifferent about it. The largeness of the amount caused me to waver, and ask myself one or two serious questions. Was it lawful and right, in my present circumstances, to expend so great a sum upon my own hobby? Would not the money be better applied in providing against any domestic contingencies? To the first, I replied that the money was not saved at the expense of my family, but from my own modest weekly allowance, and would, had no such object been in view, have been spent. The other query was met by the reflection, that I was not entirely destitute of a provision for a rainy day.

While balancing these thoughts in my mind, undecided how to act, information from a private source reached me to the effect that a government actuary had been for some time engaged investigating the accounts of the identical bank in which I had deposited my money. This communication completely stunned me. I called myself a thousand fools for hesitating while the means were in my power. A long procession of privations, endured without a murmur, passed before me; how hard the money had been obtained, and what if all should be lost at one fell swoop! The reflection was almost more than I could bear; but knowing well that despondency never helped any man out of a difficulty, I took courage, and lost no time in ascertaining the truth of the information I had received. On the following day, I went down to the bank, hoping that its affairs were not so bad as my fears had represented them to be, and that the depositors might happily be ignorant of them. In this fond hope I was disappointed; the place was crammed with angry men and women, armed with their books and notices of withdrawal. The utmost excitement prevailed, and it was with difficulty that I could obtain information that could be relied on. It appeared that one of the officials had absconded with L.800 belonging to the bank; fortunately for the depositors, a guarantee society, which was surety for the defaulter, refunded the amount. Love of truth compels me to state that every just demand was promptly met by the spirited directors, and that I received, with unfeigned thankfulness, the full amount of my deposit, with the interest thereon.

I no longer wavered in my resolution; I would not again tempt Providence. On the following Saturday, a day memorable to the writer, I found myself, with a beating heart, in the establishment of Messrs ——, upon whose counter I left the produce of four years' self-denial, and returned home that day happy in the acquisition of what I had so long coveted—a first-class microscope.

There are some persons who will condemn my conduct as foolish and extravagant; but were I to reckon up what they spend in four years in frivolous amusements, I should probably find the sum far exceed that which I gave for my microscope.

I have never regretted my purchase, nor the sacrifices I made to obtain it. Many a happy hour have I spent with its aid by my own fireside; numerous are the lessons it has taught me of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator; sermons without number, silently eloquent, has it preached to my soul; and even did I need an argument to convince the atheist of his folly, I would point to my microscope as furnishing mute but irresistible proofs of his error.

A RUN ASHORE ON THE MARQUESAS.

TOWARDS the end of August 185–, H.M.S. *Nameless* dropped anchor off Nukaheeva, the largest of the Marquesas group of islands. I never saw anything more lovely than the sea-view. Sunny little strands of white sand almost enclosed with black rocks; valleys stretching, as it seemed, into the very heart of the stupendous mountains, and perfectly dense with vegetation; purling streams stealing down through the thick forests; and, above all, the perpetual summer which reigns over all things in those latitudes.

Nukaheeva is the largest, Dominica and Santa Christini follow in order. Like the Society Islands, the conical shape, rising to immense mountains in the middle, shews their volcanic origin; and though belted in most places by coral-reefs, I, for one, never could bring myself to believe that such stupendous masses of earth and rock could be, at the most fabulously remote date, the work of the coral insect.

The trees, which in the valleys grow to an enormous height, gradually diminish in size as they reach the highest ground, leaving the summits of the hills barren and unclothed.

It is the rich valleys the natives inhabit; but so hemmed in are they by rocks and inaccessible precipices, that each forms a distinct, and often inimical tribe, meeting only to fight, and, as report says, devour each other.

As I said before, we let go our anchor, and from the depth of the water, were enabled to do so within little more than a cable-length of the shore.

I was one of the lucky ones to be sent on shore for water; and having obtained leave to stay a few hours, and try what sport I could get in the shooting-line, three of us set off, armed with guns, and incredulous as to the unenviable notoriety gained by the islanders, who as yet were invisible. Having completed our watering, we—that is to say, two midshipmen and myself—set off at a brisk pace, so elated with being on terra firma again, that I for one am sure I must have given vent to my feelings by dancing an impromptu *pas*, had not the eyes of the boat's crew and envious middy left in charge been fixed upon us. As it was, no sooner were we out of sight, than one of the trio, uttering a halloo peculiar to his own lungs, set off at a break-neck pace up the valley. Thoughts of school-days, of paper-chases, and Hunt the Hare, came over me, and, with a whoop almost equal to his own, I followed, although not without a suspicion that the savages would perhaps join in the chase.

None of us were in racing condition—a cruise on the salt water does not improve a man's wind; so we soon came to a halt, and throwing ourselves down, began puffing like so many grampuses. The spot we had come to was a green bank deliciously overshadowed by trees, and close beside a wide brook, in which the water sparkled and laughed, as if inviting us to bathe. We were debating as to the propriety of a dip, looking rather anxiously, at the same time, for any trace of an inhabitant, when our attention was attracted by a slight noise in the brook, and turning round, we beheld, in the middle of the stream, one of the finest men I ever saw. He was above six feet, with a form that would have made a sculptor's pulses thrill. His clothing, which only consisted of a girdle, left every limb displayed, and, in spite of the hideous practice all savage nations have of tattooing, he was a perfect Adonis. The ornament upon his head, composed of plumes, denoted his high rank; and in one hand he held a spear, while the other was laid upon his breast, in token of peace.

For some moments we gazed at each other. Harry, who, tradition said, had an uncle devoured by the South-sea islanders, though visibly paler, recovered his self-possession first, and rising, made a low bow to the native. This was received with a ready smile, and crossing the brook, he walked up to us, telling us he could speak English, though I must say it was not a very successful attempt. Catching a glimpse of our guns, he threw himself beside us, and examined them carefully, uttering many ejaculations of wonder and admiration. Suddenly, a brilliant idea seemed to strike him; he tried to make us understand—but it was only after much excitement on his part, and merriment on ours, that we made it out—that he wanted us to go pig-shooting with him. Nothing could have pleased us better: visions of boar-hunts such as we had read and dreamed of started before us, and we eagerly accepted him as a guide, shouldering our guns, and signifying that he should proceed.

Off he went, and on we followed into the thicket; presently he stopped, and held up his finger to order silence, and then the self-satisfied grunt a pig utters when rooting met our eager ears.

'No shoot; hide!' muttered our guide. We ensconced ourselves behind trees, while he bounded off into the brushwood, through which we heard him crashing and yelling like some demon. Then came a wild 'Halloo!' and out dashed an old sow, with a dozen porkers helter-skelter after her.

There was no time to lose, the Marquesas pigs rivalling the famous old Irish ones in their long legs and speed.

Pop, pop, pop! from our guns, and three death-squeals rang in the air, hastening the flight of the nimble parent, who seemed to think only of her own safety.

Before we could reach our game, our guide was with us, laughing and displaying the wildest delight, patting the dead porkers, and praising Englishmen. Presently, he seized one of the carcasses, and, throwing it over his shoulder, rushed off without an explanation of any sort, leaving us in a considerable dilemma as to our next move. After a council, we decided upon making our way down to the shore, taking that most acceptable thing, the fresh meat, with us. This proposition was scarcely decided when it was put a stop to by the sound of many voices; the very woods seemed alive, and to teem with natives. On came the guide, leading a group of laughing, jolly-looking savages, who were evidently listening to a good story, which, I must say, I thought was at our expense. When they drew near, curiosity predominated over every other feeling, and they pressed round, gazing with open mouths and eyes, at first in perfect silence, soon, however, broken by a perfect torrent of exclamations.

The guide now made us understand that we were expected to eat with them at a great feast, which took place that evening, and that he, being the chief, invited us.

Such an invitation, or command, backed by above sixty able-bodied savages, did not permit of hesitation. There was nothing for it but to accept, and conduct ourselves in the most conciliatory manner we could.

Thus we signified how much we appreciated the chief's kindness, and allowed ourselves to be conducted in triumph to the temple.

The path, though wide and beaten, was so encumbered with blocks of stone, that in some cases it looked impassable; over these the natives jumped as quietly as if they were mere pebbles, while we found we were undergoing the same violent reducing system jockeys go through before a great race. On our way we had an opportunity of examining the appearance of the fair sex, many of whom now crowded round, chattering and laughing as they criticised our dress. These girls were in most cases really beautiful, and upon the whole we had an extremely fair chance of judging, as, excepting a sort of girdle, or extremely short petticoat, the only dress they wore consisted of garlands of flowers, with which they decorated their heads, necks, and arms. They had beautifully tapering ankles and fairy-like feet; long glossy hair, falling in natural ringlets over their shoulders; and complexions such as Venus might have envied, and which I afterwards found were preserved by the constant use of a cosmetic compounded from the sumeric and keata roots.

We soon reached the palace, temple, or club, call it what you will, for it partook of all three, being alike the habitation of the chief, the tabooed dwelling of the priests, and the rendezvous for the men of the tribe who, like their civilised brethren, seemed to find great delight in having a place of resort into which the gentle sex were not permitted to enter.

The places of abode in Nukaheeva are very curious, the foundation consisting of a sort of pyramid of huge blocks of cut stone, though how formed, is perfectly unknown to the natives, who attribute it to the gods, and not, as others would be more likely to do, to some former inhabitants. These stones are placed at the side of the valley, and form the basis of the dwelling, which is made of bamboos, interwoven with hibiscus rods, in a light and tasteful trellis-work, leaving free circulation to the air. The roof rises gradually from the sides, which are generally about five feet high, to a height of eleven or twelve. This is thatched with palm-leaves, and has a peculiarly picturesque appearance.

Round the building we now approached, a low fence of canes was built, and here and there strange little temples, fluttering with *strips* of the sacred white tapa. The women all fell back, it being a crime punishable by death for them to set foot within the tabooed ground.

Evident preparations for some grand event were going briskly forward. To these the chief pointed to with great glee, and led the way up the flight of steps conducting to his palace. Here he sat down upon a pile of mats, which were laid thickly about, covering the entire floor.

Clapping his hands with the dignity of an eastern prince, the chief ordered refreshments to be brought. These refreshments consisted of bread-fruit, prepared in different ways, one of which was a sort of gruel made of the pounded fruit, mixed with ground cocoanut. For my part, as soon as I learned to roll it into balls and thus convey it to my mouth, all went well with me, and I could afford to laugh heartily at the attempts my companions made, daubing their faces over with the sweet sticky mess.

Whilst reclining after our light repast, we were much amused by the preparations going forward for the feast, and particularly by the cookery. The three porkers had somehow increased to fully three times their number, and I began to think the natives must be no mean sportsmen. These carcasses were passed through the flames, and thus effectually singed; they were then disembowelled; the interior arrangements were laid aside as peculiarly delicate morsels, and the body was then wrapped in a covering of palm-leaves, firmly secured by twigs. The embers being removed, this was laid upon the hot earth, a few sods piled over it, and the fire being heaped above and round, was left to cook at leisure. During the interval that elapsed, we enjoyed a quiet siesta, in which, it would appear, all the natives indulged, excepting only those who were superintending the culinary department. When we had dozed for about an hour, we were roused up to eat the 'porkers;' and certainly a more delicious mode of cooking could not have been invented: the steam having been kept in the meat, it was very juicy and slightly flavoured with a nondescript taste imparted by the green palm-leaves; it was handed to us laid out in a curiously carved wooden trough. We found ourselves giving way to unequivocal sensations of hunger, which ended in the drawing out of our knives, and an onslaught upon the bruised pork.

For some time the natives let us have it all our own way; then, with much humour, tried to imitate our method of carving, each failure making them laugh heartily. Finally, they had recourse to their own primitive mode, illustrating the old saying peculiar to the nursery, 'that fingers were made before forks.'

When the bare bones of the porkers told of our appetites, we began to think something to drink would be no bad thing. This request was happily forestalled by the chief, and five or six boys squatted down round a large bowl, each supplied with a cocoanut shell of water, to wash their mouths, preparatory to the mastication of the nut, from which the *ava* is made, and which they chew and then spit into the bowl until partly full, when it is filled up with fresh water, well stirred, and when the heavy portions have sunk to the bottom, handed round. I was very thirsty, and tried to drink it, but could not; not, I am obliged to confess, from any highly wrought delicacy as to the preparation, but simply that, in my opinion at least, the taste was abominable.

After the chief and his friends had drained the bowl, we set off in the direction from which the loud noise indicated the centre of the merriment. The music, if such it could be called, consisted of large drums, made of the hollowed trunks of bamboo-trees, placed upright on the ground, the upper end being covered with a shark's skin, tightly stretched, and tied down by bands of native cloth. Behind these drums, a platform was erected, and on this the performers mounted, beating the head with their open hands, and causing thereby the most inharmonious din I ever had the misfortune of being compelled to listen to.

The crowd that had assembled was much larger than I had been led to suppose resided in the little valley, and presented an appearance at once striking and picturesque, the natives being all clothed in their gala-dresses. This, in the men, merely consisted of necklaces of whales' and sharks' teeth, or occasionally the half of an elaborately carved and polished drinking-cup, suspended like a breast-plate, the forehead being ornamented with a similar one, looking not unlike a mitre in miniature; while, in addition to the belt we have mentioned as their only clothing, they wore gaily dyed scarfs of tapa, or native cloth; while many of those who boasted high rank had a sort of plume of white hair instead of feathers. This white hair was formerly the beard of an old man; it being a lucrative trade in the Marquesas to let the beard grow to a great length, and then cut it off for the above-mentioned head-dress.

The girls, though beautiful before, were now perfect Bacchantes, all wearing wreaths of flowers or leaves, with necklaces, bracelets, and earrings of the same; their hair floating in wild glossy curls, almost concealing their figures as they joined in the dance; their dark sparkling eyes and cheeks glowing with mirth and happiness; and lastly, the robe or shawl of almost transparent tapa, which they managed in such a coquettish manner as to heighten rather than diminish or conceal their charms. I had heard and read of the beauty of some of the islanders, but its reality far exceeded my most sanguine expectations; and can it be wondered when I relate that we fell over head and ears in love with the bewitching creatures, and bitterly regretted the parting-hour coming all too soon, and long before the mirth of the evening was over, dragging us back to shipboard and duty. Most cordially we promised to return, and enjoy a regular day's shooting, the chief offering to be our guide. The whole tribe accompanied us to the beach, loading the boat with cocoa-nut and bread-fruit; and with real sorrow we bade the kind natives farewell, having but vague hopes of being permitted to visit them again, even should our stay admit of such a proposal.

The Marquesas are certainly the most gentlemanly savages I ever came across, and the way they obtained their evil reputation was, like many similar cases, from the bad conduct of navigators. A ship anchored off the island, and sent the crew on shore. These men committed all sorts of havoc—shooting down the natives, and burning their houses. That night the poor exasperated creatures swam out, and attached ropes to the ship. So silently and well was their work managed, that until the ship was drawn close up to the shore, there was no alarm given. Then it came too late, and only half-a-dozen men escaped to blazon forth to the credulous world such a tale of horror that for years people have spoken of the islanders with a thrill of disgust and fear, but with how little truth, my own experience convinces me.

CASTLE WALLS.

On the 'leaguered castle wall stand nine stalwart warriors tall;
Hearts that once had scorned the thought of a life by treason bought,
Now are faint and wav'ring all.

And they say: 'Nine days we've fought, but Sir Ronald cometh not,
And the castle's outer wall, ere another day, must fall;
Shall we sell our lives for nought?

'Hath not blood enough been shed? In the moat, all stark and dead,
Fifteen of our comrades brave lie in deep and bloody grave,
And all vainly have they bled.

'Ere again a setting sun shine these castle walls upon,
We must yield unto the foe, and from out the castle go,
Or lie dead as they have done.'

Wherefore start those warriors tall, standing on the castle wall?
Courage that once nought could bow, quails before a light step now,
And they wait in silence all;

For a lady tall and fair stands upon the ramparts there,
And her dark and kindling eyes, raised on them in sad surprise,
Not a man to meet doth dare.

'Can it be,' at length she said, 'that our true men all lie dead?
Count ye nought your knightly word, plighted to your absent lord,
Nor the brave blood freely shed?

'By the sacred trust ye bear, by your knighthood's honour fair,
By all love of truth and right, I adjure you, friends, to-night,
Death before dishonour dare!'

Oh! those true words they have heard, as by note of trumpet stirred;
And a loyal shout arose, hurling scorn down at the foes,
Plighting faith to their good lord.

Now the night hath gathered round, hushed is every warlike sound,
Save the sentinel's hoarse call, as he paceth on the wall
By the castle turrets crowned;

But as breaks another day, marks he, gazing far away,
How the first faint gleams of light glance from many a weapon bright,
Moving on in war-array.

Oh! O sight with joy to thrill every true heart beating still,
For a brave band, onward led by Sir Ronald at their head,
Move on steadfast up the hill.

Now the hill-top hath been won, and the conflict fierce begun;
Fighting as for more than life, faithful friends and loving wife,
Young Sir Ronald cheers them on.

Through the centre of the foe, still with flashing swords they go,
Struggling on, till round them falls shadow from the castle walls,
And the strife doth deadlier grow.

And the battle's dreadful din reaches to the tower within,
Where the lady pale doth kneel, praying for her dear lord's weal,
Or that she may die with him.

Hark! a pause, then loud and clear rings a wild exultant cheer,
For the foe have turned to fly, but not ere their bravest lie
On the blood-stained heath anear.

Now the castle gates wide thrown, backward on their hinges groan,
And glad sounds of greeting go, upward from the hall below,
To the lady's turret lone.

Straight with beating heart she rose, for her dear lord's voice she knows,
Knows his step upon the stair, nor hath reached the portal ere
His true arms around her close!

A. W. B.

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THE LEECH-MERCHANT OF MARASH.

Some few years ago, whilst out with a party of friends on a sporting tour through the districts which embrace the pachalics of Adana, Aleppo, and Marash, we halted at the latter city to repose awhile after our fatigues and exposure, and in so doing became the guests of the brothers Artous, who were the only Europeans there resident, and whose presence was only tolerated by the fanatical and almost exclusively Turkish population, because they held employment under the Ottoman government. They were the farmers who held the exclusive privilege of fishing for leeches throughout these districts; and from this monopoly they annually derived a considerable surplus income, despite the extravagant sum originally paid to the government, and the many small and vexatious exactions on the part of the local authorities, which they were compelled to submit to with the best grace they could command.

The elder Artous—there were three brothers in all—had discovered this field of wealth under the most singular and remarkable circumstances. Like ourselves, he, in company with some French captains, had journeyed thither, intent upon sport, and amidst their rambles had stumbled across the extensive marshes about here, which teem with snipe and water-fowl of all kinds at certain seasons of the year. The party had spread themselves along the borders, agreeing upon a certain rendezvous for their mid-day *déjeûner*, and soon after Artous waded in amongst the rushes in search of game. The sun glared fiercely down upon the unwholesome spot; and suddenly the young sportsman, unwatched by mortal eye, staggered, struck by a *coup de soleil*, and fell senseless, prostrate in the muddy water, which was fortunately very shallow thereabouts. Here, in all probability, he would have speedily succumbed, and become food for jackals, had it not been for the fortunate circumstance that the place was literally alive with leeches; and scores of these hungry creatures speedily settled themselves about the bare throat and face of the sufferer. The loss of blood that ensued after a short while revived the man, and though exceedingly weakened, and a most pitiable object to behold, he managed to extricate himself from his unenviable position, and to crawl towards the appointed rendezvous, where some of the shipmasters had already arrived, who, with the assistance of burned rags, contrived to stop the hemorrhage, and carried Artous to the nearest sheik's house, where he was hospitably nursed. Had it not been for the loss of blood, he must have expired where he fell; and if ever any remnant of him came to light, it would have possibly thrown the whole district into trouble, and affixed the stigma of a foul murder upon an innocent people. It was for Artous, however, a most happy calamity. He foresaw an inexhaustible field of riches, for he knew the value and the demand for leeches in France. He started off for Marseille at once, got his brothers to join stock with himself, went back to Constantinople, and there, with the assistance of the French ambassador, made a compact with the sultan's government, and took undisputed possession of these horribly unwholesome, and, one would have thought, useless marshes, with a proper firman in his pocket. This had occurred some years before our visit, and the lease of the monopoly had in the interval on more than one occasion expired, and been renewed; he each time having been obliged to pay a larger and larger amount for the privilege; for the local authorities had found out what a treasure-trove this infidel Frank had stumbled across, and tried all in their power to oust him from his position. But the highest sum bid always carried the day, and Artous could at any time, with so promising a speculation to back him, have raised enough on 'Change at Marseille to have bought up all Adana.

Such is a brief outline of the antecedents of our friend the leech-merchant; and now a brief sketch of his everyday-life and occupations, and of the domestic economy of his household arrangements, may not prove wholly uninteresting. The better to secure both his person and his property, he had taken up the lease of some six or eight ruinous old houses, each one of which boasted of an extensive courtyard, and which were situated in the immediate vicinity of the Serai or pacha's palace, where a considerable body-guard and the pacha's personal influence offered a safeguard to these venturesome strangers. Levelling the inner walls of separation, building up all the street-door entrances, save the one nigh to the pacha's palace, which gate he had caused to be enlarged and strengthened, Artous had constituted of these half-dozen or eight enclosures one immense and extensive compound, in which flourished a perfect grove of orange and lemon trees, and one or two stately and prolific apricots, whose shade was most acceptable and grateful during the heat of the day. There were, besides, one or two fountains in full play, and innumerable wells and reservoirs, these latter having been constructed with an eye to business. He had suffered all the houses to remain *in statu quo*, only devoting most of them to purposes very different to what they had been originally intended for. One, for instance, served as a reservoir for the peculiar clay in which the leeches have to be packed prior to being shipped; whilst the next house was piled up to the ceilings with the empty boxes, destined to contain both clay and leeches, all of which had finely perforated bottoms, so that the surplus water, which has to be poured over these boxes from time to time during the voyage, should ooze out, and not rot the cases and destroy the leeches themselves. A third house was a huge reservoir of full-grown leeches, wriggling horribly about in everything that could serve to contain them, from an empty pickle-bottle to a large stone reservoir which had been constructed in the flooring. It was for the purpose of frequently supplying these with fresh water that so many wells and the fountains were found indispensable; for this precaution was necessary during the hottest month of the year, as much for the leeches as for the health of the human occupants, who had quite enough to contend against in local causes of pestilence, from the filthy and neglected streets, without cultivating a hot-bed of disease close by their very couches. The fourth house had been neatly fitted up as a counting-house, and was, indeed, exclusively devoted to this purpose; and here the business part of the premises may be said to have terminated.

In sudden and gratifying exchange for the clay and the leeches—and the whole of *their* portion of the yard was paved, except where orange and lemon trees sprouted—we came upon a fine soil, with gravel-walks, interspersed with pleasant little arbours here and there, the whole being neatly laid out with roses and jessamine, and other sweet-scented flowers. One uncouth individual of our party suggested that a few onions and radishes would be far more useful and economic; but this Goth was obliged to hide his diminished head when he was told that a horse-load of the delicacies he envied could be purchased for about a halfpenny sterling.

Our friend the leech-merchant, being innately a cosmopolite, had very wisely determined, during his voluntary exile amongst the barbarians that surrounded him, to provide himself with every necessary and luxury, European and Oriental, that his purse could command. His store-rooms were a perfect sight, and one certainly that no one could dream to meet with in the very heart of a fanatical Turkish town. Wines, beer, spirits, liqueurs, champagne, sardines, hams—hear it, O gray-bearded mufti!—cheeses, sausages, pickles; in fact, everything that oilman's, brewer's, and wine-merchant's stores combined could produce. Then his kitchen had been constructed upon a European model; and until a bad fever had cruelly deprived him of his aid, Artous used to rejoice in the skill of an *artiste*—a veritable French cook—whose fame had attracted captains and foreigners of all descriptions from every seaport within a score or so of miles. But he, alas! was gone the way of all flesh, and an Armenian from Aleppo had stepped into his shoes; a very sorry substitute indeed, we were told.

The leech-merchant's house itself was a strange mixture of European and oriental taste—one, however, not ill adapted to the climate. He had French-polished bedsteads side by side with Turkish divans; chairs were confined to the dining-room; walnut-wood wash-hand stands, with oriental ewers and basins in the bedroom; some floors covered with Egyptian mats, some with Turkoman carpets, some with French manufactured oil-cloth. What was an extraordinary treat for us, he had positively chests of capital tea; and as there was very excellent milk procurable in the town, we enjoyed this beverage in spite of the mufti and the ulemas, and all the other fanatics of the town. In another room in the house there was plenty of food for the mind—books and pamphlets, files of newspapers and a microscope; and, dreadful innovation! even a photographic machine, with which Artous amused himself during many a dull hour, taking likenesses of his unconscious workmen in the yard, who were all bigoted Turks, and who would have left him, to a man, could they have dreamed that their physiognomies were being transferred by the aid of the sun for a lot of Franks some day or other to be laughing at their beards: and to do them justice, they were the ugliest set of ruffians one could easily clap eyes upon. Their *poverty* and not their *will* consented to labour for a dog of a Christian, and eat his salt.

An irruption of travellers had always been a godsend to the hospitable little leech-merchant, but of late years such events had become very rare indeed, and his had been a sad dull life of monotony, though his business gave him full occupation during the day. It seldom happened that either of his brothers could remain with him for a longer space than a week or so at intervals of months, so that he was completely isolated from all society save such as he could derive from conversing with the Italian doctor of the troops, who was a clever man, but a renegade and a misanthrope to boot; so Artous was entirely dependent upon his own resources. It was necessary that one brother should be travelling to and fro through the district to visit the various agents, and to keep an eye upon petty doctors and other poachers, who, whenever an opportunity offered, infringed upon the fishing monopoly, and embarked upon small private speculations greatly to his detriment. The other brother passed his life in perpetually voyaging to and fro between Marseille and Mersina (the seaport town of Tarsus), convoying batches of leeches to the French markets, superintending their care during the voyage, and thence returning only for a fresh supply. Hence it arose that the elder Artous was almost always alone; and the following was, as he told us, and as we witnessed, the everyday routine of his life through a series of long years.

He had upwards of two hundred and fifty men, women, and children in his employment, whom he paid at the rate of so much per dozen for leeches, the price varying according to the size and quality. Although these poor wretches—and a more deplorable sickly-looking set it is hard to conceive—had nothing to rely upon for their daily food, coarse and scant as that was, except their occupation of leech-fishing, they were innately so indolent, that Artous himself was obliged to rouse them up at daybreak, and drive them before him into the marshes; the fishery is always bad after the heat of the day sets in, as the leeches are apt to die by hundreds on being transported from the marshes to the store-rooms, so that it is necessary they should be in the water betimes; there with naked legs, which very soon streamed with what poor blood their veins contained, they would dabble about for a couple of hours or so, sprinkling salt upon every fresh batch that had affixed themselves, so as to detach them, and inserting them into deep narrow earthen bowls, half filled with muddy water. During this interval, our host, who possessed a capital stud and plenty of good dogs, amused himself by coursing and shooting in the vicinity, always, however, accompanied by a couple of body-servants, in case of any accident. Game he always bagged in abundance; and amongst other things to be met with at his house was a tame young bear, which he had picked up during one of his rambles; a flamingo that had been winged, but was recovering; a pelican that catered for himself every day in the lakes nigh at hand, and regularly came back home by sunset; and innumerable other small fry in the shape of birds and beasts of all descriptions.

About ten o'clock, the leech-merchant and his grotesque-looking crew would hurry home through the shadiest streets; and refreshing the leeches by a fresh supply of water, he would leave his overseers to count and pay for them, and then see them properly disposed of before the people were dismissed for the day. Seldom, very seldom did he employ them during the evening, but then, of course, it was at their own option to remain out all day if they chose; for as many live leeches as they brought in they would be sure to get paid for.

After *déjeûner*, which was usually partaken of *al fresco* under an apricot—where often in the season luscious ripe fruit plumped into your plate invitingly—one or two old Turkish officers, with slippers down at heel and pipe in hand, would stroll in to have a chat with the 'Salukjee Bashi' (lit., the head of the leeches), and may be play a few games of draughts or dominoes with him, with an ultimate eye to a large tumbler of French wine. Then from mid-day, when Turkish guests retire for prayers and dinner, and the after-dinner siesta, the solitary leech-merchant finds solace for a while amongst his books or papers, or under the influence of Latakia tobacco, speculates upon the probable results of the living stock on hand; else he betakes himself to his counting-house, and plunges fathoms-deep into accounts or speculations, or sets to with a hearty good-will to rattle off a long business and private correspondence which can be closed at any future date, as opportunity presents itself for forwarding a mail. Then, again, at intervals of every seven days, a hot and tired government Tatar would rap furiously at the outer door, and pleasantly interrupt the monotony of everyday-life at Marash by handing in packets of letters and bundles of newspapers, which are a very god-send to the leech-merchant in this solitude, and afford his mind pleasant recreation during those dull and dark hours intervening between his six o'clock dinner and bed-time; an interval when the whole city is hushed to rest—the people having retired to rest with the cocks and hens—when even his very servants are drowsy over their evening pipes, and the solitude and desolation would prove insufferable but for the absorbing interest contained in the file of French papers; or when these are wanting, even the meagre Constantinople one, with its gratifying intelligence about the sultan attending mosque regularly, serves to pass off a dull hour or so; and what with chiboukes and something hot before turning in, the time drags on some way or another, and it is a consoling thought to the exiled leech-merchant to know that every succeeding week is adding to the bulk of his banker's account, and shortening the distance between his present life and that which he has in perspective, should his days be prolonged.

Once a year, as the proper season approaches, and the arrival of the Marseille brother announces the fact, a perfect revolution seizes upon the leech-merchant's everyday-life, and from early dawn until close upon midnight all is bustle and hurry within doors. Then are all the meagre leech-fishers hard at it filling the empty cases, now with a layer of soft clay, then with a thick layer of writhing leeches, then another layer of clay, then more leeches, and so on alternately, taking care to moisten the clay well as they go along from a pitcher close at hand. Carpenters there are, too, nailing up the boxes as soon as they are packed, or constructing fresh ones against any urgent demand. Other labourers are piling them up in convenient sizes and weights, so as to form loads for camels or mules, and cording them together strongly. Camel-drivers and muleteers add to the turmoil, squabbling amongst themselves about respective weights and loads. Custom-house officers are here too noisy for *bucshish* over and above the duty levied; and a military-looking Turk, in one slipper and one boot, who is the pacha's private secretary, whispers significantly to Artous that the season has been a profitable one, '*Il Hamdil Allah!*' (God be praised), and that the pacha would like to drink prosperity to the said merchant and his friends in a dozen or so of real French cognac.

Finally, everything is ready against a start; the young bear, and the pelican, and the wounded flamingo, are commended to the custody of the Armenian cook; and Artous and his friends vaulting into their saddles, take the lead of a caravan carrying some millions of leeches, which, in the course of a fortnight or so, will be far away at sea, freight paid, and cargo insured; and in a month or six weeks hence, our friend the leech-merchant has converted the disgusting but useful article he traffics in into solid and equally useful gold coins.

DEATH IN THE INKPOT.

It is certain that the Millennium of the Periodical Writer is at last arrived. With a new weekly journal starting every month or so, and a new magazine or two with every quarter, it cannot be but that the dawning Poet, the beardless Philosopher, the sucking Divine, and even the Conundrum-maker of tenderest years, must find acceptance and expression *somewhere.* A score of new-built Temples of Fame open their double doors and columns to the young aspirant whithersoever he looks, and upon the steps thereof stand beckoning Editors, who seem to say: 'Walk up, ye young contributors—walk up, and give us "copy," lest we perish before our time.' Some very young contributors indeed appear now and then to avail themselves of this invitation; and we anticipate the same difficulty in the future education of the middle classes which is now found to exist so generally in the lower—fathers will be refusing to send their offspring to school upon the ground of the loss of their literary labour as writers for the periodical press.

Never was so convincing an instance of demand creating supply; and our not unnatural apprehension is, that the Public—the Readers—will presently disappear altogether, and nothing be left but a world of Editors and Contributors. It is with the hope of delaying this unsatisfactory conclusion that we venture to call the attention of the great army of Periodical Writers—and especially of its young recruits—to the last quarterly *Journal of the Statistical Society*, wherein occurs a paper upon the Duration of Life as affected by the Pursuits of Literature, Science, and Art, by William A. Guy, M.B., which concerns them very seriously.

Hesitate, O young Romancist, with thy tender brain—scarce recovered from the shock of the joining of thine infant skull—set seething with the wrongs of thy fictitious Angelina, or the sanguinary deeds in which thou art preparing to plunge thy treacherous Rudolph. Suspend, rash youth, thy suicidal hand, as it hovers over the inkpot, for Mr Guy says there is Death in it, or at least a want of Duration of Life!

Youthful Joker, who, with splitting head and soda-water, art elaborating daily *facetiæ* for splitting sides, let the world wag as it will without thy tickling. For every pun of thine, it is probable that a week of thine existence is forfeited; and thine every *double-entendre* has a third meaning which has very little fun in it indeed, we do assure thee. After each laborious sharpening at thy mental whetstone, grim Time takes a fatal sweep with his scythe, every self-satisfied smile of thine produces its wrinkle, and thy lightest and least appreciated *jeu d'esprit* its gray hair!

Above all, dawning Poet, be in no haste to convince thyself that thou art inspired. If thou canst not write verses without Walker's *Rhyming Dictionary*, it will be worse than waste for thee to invest thy capital in such a purchase. The making of rhymes is a slow poison, to thyself, a certain destruction, and —if thou wouldst but believe it—by no means so great an advantage to others as to be compensatory. A sonnet is a limb of time lopped off from the trunk of thine existence; an ode eats into its very vitals, and saps its strength; and an epic is even as an axe laid to the root of thy tree. The writing of blank verse is about as permissible as the taking of opium; it is soothing indeed (and so far grateful both to reader *and* writer), but it is but the one-horse hearse, which, more slowly, but not less certainly than the Couplet conveyance, must carry the poet to the tomb!

'In treating,' says Mr Guy, 'of the duration of life of literary men, I must be understood to be speaking of a mixed class, consisting, on the one hand, of those who have no one distinct and defined professional calling, but who make literature one of their pursuits, and the duration of whose life is consequently affected by the habits of composition in very various degrees; and, on the other hand, of those with whom literature is a distinct profession. I have been able to collect from Chalmers's *Biographical Dictionary*, with a supplement of facts from the *Annual Register* from 1815 to 1852, 942 ages at death of men more or less devoted to literary pursuits, and of more or less celebrity in different walks of literature. Some of the deceased persons were described as antiquaries, others as historians, others as poets, others as miscellaneous writers, and a small body of authors as schoolmasters. These distinctions I have thought it worth while to retain in the following tables, giving at the same time, in a supplemental column, a general total for literature as the one pursuit to which all were more or less earnestly and constantly devoted.'

Whatever unpleasant conclusion is here arrived at, therefore, to the prejudice of semi-literary men, it suggests something far less satisfactory to those who make literature their exclusive profession.

'The two sections of the literary class headed "poets" and "schoolmasters" are found to occupy a low place in the scale of longevity. Whether we commence the register of deaths at 21, at 26, at 31, at 41, or at 51, their average age at death is uniformly below the average for miscellaneous writers and for antiquaries and historians. It may be allowable to inquire whether there is anything in the calling of the poet to account for the comparatively short duration of his life. The first consideration that offers itself in possible explanation of the short duration of the poet's life is, that poets enter the class to which they belong at a comparatively early age, while other literary men, and especially antiquaries and historians, enter their respective classes, and commence their characteristic pursuits, at a more advanced period of life. If, as seems highly probable, the class of living poets is always a young class, compared with other literary men, the average age at death will be below par. But it is quite possible that the poetical temperament, as it is commonly called, may be *a phase of constitutional weakness* (Heavens!), and a cause of early death. That poets, as a class, are short lived, is rendered probable by the low recorded ages at death of the Roman poets: thus, Tibullus died at 24; Persius, at 28; Lucilius and Catullus, at 46; Virgil, at 52; Horace, at 57; Ovid, at 59; Martial, at 75; and Terence, at 88. The average for these nine poets is nearly 53 years. Against these nine names of Roman poets, may be placed, as having been short lived, the English poets, Kirke White, who died at 21 years of age; Collins, at 36; Parnell and Robert Burns, at 37; Goldsmith, at 46; Thomson, at 48; Cowley, at 49; Shakspeare, at 52; and Pope at 56. These nine English poets, selected as having been short lived, attained an average age of about 42 years, or more than ten years less than the nine unselected Roman poets.'

Oh, Universal Rhymster, take this to thy harmonious heart, and if thou wouldst live long in the land, send us less of thine innumerable verse! Schoolmasters, 'exposed to the serious drawback of confinement with their pupils during many hours of the day, in an atmosphere rarely of the purest,' it is true, are found to have even a less average of life than Bards; but that is a circumstance with which we ourselves (who have been to many unprofitable schools, who have travelled, scholastically, in our time, from Dan to Beersheba, and found *all* barren) do not affect to sympathise with. One poet, indeed, managed to live on to his one hundred and fifteenth year, and thereby keeps up the average of the life of his class amazingly, but there may have been extenuating circumstances in the case; he was an Irishman—one Mr T. O'Sullivan—and perhaps had some Irish method of composition which preserved him from the fate of his brethren; and, besides, there is no knowing how long he *might* have lived, if he could only have kept himself from this baneful practice of poetical composition.

It is of importance to mention that the conjugal state is found to prolong the scanty span allotted to the literary existence—to lessen the deadly effects of the Inkpot very considerably. The Married are calculated to have a vitality of five years beyond that enjoyed—no, not enjoyed, endured—by the Unmarried.

Men of Science have a longer tether of existence than the Professors of the Fine Arts, and these, again, more rope than the unhappy devotees of Literature. Many of the last live to be old enough, it is true, when they are once over certain dangerous epochs, but the majority (look to it, O young contributors!) *die early!* The table, taken as a whole, seems to prove that the pursuits of literature are not unfavourable to longevity, indeed, but very destructive to life at the earlier periods.

Of the three learned professions, the Clergy—including the proverbially obstinate Fellows of Colleges whose vacancies are being waited for, and the 'warming pans' who have been chosen to occupy livings until the young proprietors are of age—is found to be the longest lived; then the Lawyers; and the Doctors the shortest, which does not look well for the class whose mission it is to keep other people from dying.

Finally, the following figures represent the average age at death of the members of seven classes, *who have passed their thirtieth year*, leaving kings and members of the royal family (who would otherwise be fifth in the list) out of the question:

'English aristocracy, 67·31; English gentry, 70·22; learned professions, 68·86; trade and commerce, 68·74; officers of the army and navy, 67·59; English literature and science, 67·55; the fine arts, 65·96. The mixed class of the English gentry, occupying as they do an intermediate position between the aristocracy and the professions, largely devoted to healthy rural pursuits and manly English sports, recruited from the most energetic and successful of the professional and industrial classes, more occupied than the aristocracy, less anxious than the professions, less ambitious than the votaries of literature, science, and art, is distinguished from the classes above and below it by a favourable duration of life. The aristocracy, more luxurious, and less generally occupied, pays for its perilous advantages of social position with some few years of life, occupying an intermediate place between the mixed cultivators of literature and science and the short-lived devotees of art. This unfavourable position of the aristocracy would seem to be dependent not on any inherent weakness of constitution, for statesmen, who are for the most part members of that class, attain to a very favourable duration of life, but to that cause which Celsus, nearly 2000 years ago, pointed out as the parent of a large family of diseases unknown to less artificial modes of existence—luxury.'

Thus the Professors of Literature are the shortest lived of any class save one, and the shortest lived of any, if those members of it who die before they complete their thirtieth year had been included in the calculation. If Man is but a Flower, what, then, is a Literary Man? In the well-known words of one of the poets of the Nursery (who himself perhaps died early, and before his powers were matured), he is more like that Butterfly, born, indeed, in a Bower, but who died, in spite of the invigorating effects of being christened in a Tea-pot, within an Hour. Pause, then, dawning Poets, beardless Philosophers, sucking Divines, Conundrum-makers of tender years, and young Miscellaneous Contributors of all descriptions, and consider whether it is not better to have ten more years in the flesh than to enjoy immortality in the columns of even an illustrated periodical! The average of the British statesman's existence is 77·71!! Embrace that profession, therefore, O young Contributor, and long life to you. If you be a Lord, the path is open to you already; and if you be not a Lord—with your talents and personal attractions, it will be surely easy enough for you to marry a Lord's daughter!

TROUBLES AT SANDSTONE.

IN EIGHT CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER VII.—ANNIVERSARY-NIGHT.

There is a full attendance to-night at the little chapel on the cliffs. Despite the darkness and the rain, few members of the community are absent. The anniversary of the foundation of their chapel is duly celebrated every year by the fishermen of Sandstone, and there is scarcely a household in the hamlet that has not contributed its quota to the congregation this evening. Even Widow Watson—though her daughter is forbidden these precincts, and at this very moment, indeed, is toiling home in the darkness with fresh work from the slop-shop at Lynmouth—even she has ventured within the chapel walls to-night, and, fortified by the presence of Jim Bowes, who winks encouragement at her, as she enters, takes heart of grace and a corner seat amongst her fellow-sinners.

When the discourse from the Lynmouth minister was ended, the business report for the year was read; then came the collection, and a metallic rain seemed to fall around, as the coin—chiefly in coppers—descended on the plates. A hymn succeeded, and when that was done, Michael Hawser, rising from his seat, said: 'Before we part to-night, I've a word to address to this congregation. Friends, will you keep your seats.' With knitted brows and a stern face, the deacon strode to the little platform in front of the pulpit. One could have heard a pin fall, in the silence that followed this announcement. 'I've been a member o' this chapel,' began Michael Hawser, in a slow, distinct voice, and with all eyes turned on him, 'more than thirty years, and I've been a deacon nigh on twenty. I started the Sunday-school and the Bible-class—both on 'em—amongst us. What I could do i' the Lord's service, I've done right willingly, nor spared time nor money, as you all know. I think, then, I needn't ask anybody here whether I've earned the right to be heard i' this place or not. I think the life I've led, and taught my children to lead, has given me that right. What I've now got to say is, that as I've gone on up to this hour, so, wi' God's help, will I go on to the last day o' my life. I'll never leave undone what my duty here bids me do, no matter what friends and neighbours think or say. My duty to-night is this—to put a sinner to shame, and end a course of sin and deceit. I've found out —no matter when, no matter how—that one of the scholars in my class'—here he turned and looked at the young women sitting on the front bench—'is engaged in courses as will lead her to shame and ruin. I've found out that she, coming here week by week to hear the Word read and preached, has so far gone astray, that she is about to leave her home and kindred at the bidding of a stranger. I've found out that he who counsels her to this is one as we've all trusted and believed in. So I now bid her who hears these words, and knows 'em to be true, to go forth from among us, and never shew herself here again. I bid her companions shun her, as they fear the leprosy o' sin. Let them hold no intercourse wi' her; but let her go her way, and learn—as she soon will—how the Lord deals wi' them who set their faces to do evil, and whose ways are the ways of transgression.' He stopped, and the ticking of the clock over the roof grew audible in the silence. O Michael Hawser, thou art drawing down on thyself judgments heavier than any thou threatenest!

'If my words don't move her,' he continued, singling out with his gaze one of the young women before him, and speaking in a still sterner voice—'if my words fail to move her, I hold in my hand what will put her boldness to shame. Last night, I found this knife in the chapel-yard; it was dropped by the man who wrote the letter counselling flight. That man was Mr Lennox! Yes, the stranger whose life we saved, repays us i' this way! And now, Miriam Clarke, if your heart ain't harder than the nether millstone'——

Had the lights in the iron hoop suspended over Michael's head grown dim in a moment, or did a wind sweep in and bow them suddenly?

'Stay, father—stay!' The words were uttered in a low but distinct tone from the further end of the chapel. Every heart turned chill at the sound. There, in the entrance, with the doors flung open, stood a pale, dishevelled figure, with eyes like living coals, and the rain streaming from her hair. At the sight of that terrible apparition, Michael Hawser's upraised hand, in which gleamed the sparkling knife, fell to his side.

'Father!' cried the figure, 'come home, come home, and God ha' mercy on us!' Martha held up a letter, and looked at her father with a stricken face.

'Martha, Martha!' gasped Michael. 'You come to tell me'—— His lips worked fast, but no sound escaped them. Had his dead wife risen from her grave in the yard outside, and stood there before him, Michael Hawser's face could not have worn a more livid, ghastly hue. Every one sat paralysed, and gazed at his neighbour in fear.

'Father, I came to warn you, but I come too late. God's judgment is on our house. Come home, come home!' Martha spoke in the same voice, and stood there with the same stricken face. But her father heard no more. The light had suddenly gone out from his eyes; he turned ashy gray, his jaw fell, and ere his daughter could reach his side, Michael Hawser dropped down on the floor, as though a bolt from Heaven had struck him.

The clouds hang low to-night out on the bleak cliffs that lie around Sandstone. Susan Watson, returning home from Lynmouth, draws close her threadbare shawl—a poor protection against such a rain as this—and plods on wearily but bravely through the darkness. And the darkness to-night is of a kind to try one's courage: it is a dense, impenetrable darkness, that shuts out earth and sky, and hangs around you like something that could be touched or drawn aside. One needs to know the road well to-night, or a few false steps, and you may topple headlong from these heights into the sea that roars below.

Once, Susan finds herself in danger of being ridden down by a horseman, whose approach she has not heard on the soft grass. The late traveller reins up his steed, mutters an angry exclamation against the darkness, and asks, in a muffled voice, in what direction the Sandstone gravel-pits lie. As he bids her good-night, and rides on again, Susan wonders who he may be who rides thus late along these heights, and on such a night. The gravel-pits, too! Who can have business there at this hour? Susan fancies she has heard the traveller's voice before, and goes on her way, perplexed and pondering.

Susan Watson is a brave lass, and the dark night has few terrors for her; but she had not proceeded another mile, when there came a sound to her ears that turned her blood cold with fear. It was a long, loud cry that woke the sea-birds in their rocky nests, and sent them whirring round her in the dark. It was the wildest, most despairing sound Susan had ever heard. It died away, and left the night silent as before, save that there now seemed terror in its darkness and silence. Susan set off running, with a beating heart, nor stayed her steps till the lights in the cottage windows at Sandstone were in sight.

What was there amiss in the village to-night that there were so many people abroad so late? Why did the folks stand gathered about their doorways, talking so earnestly to one another? Alas! Susan learned soon enough what had happened. Her mother stood waiting for her on the threshold, and bidding her come in, she pointed to the figure sitting by the hearth. It was Jim Bowes, crying like a child.

'O Sue, here's a peck o' troubles!' cried Mrs Watson, wiping her eyes. 'I can hardly tell ye what's happened, 'deed I can't. Look at Jim; he's been like that ever sin'.'

When Susan heard of Ellen Hawser's flight, she turned very pale, and a keen pang shot through her heart. Was another to suffer what she had done? She went to her chamber, but not to sleep. The news she had heard filled her with grief and fear—fear which was strangely associated in her mind with the wild cry she had heard out on the cliffs that night. Falling asleep towards morning, she dreamed she heard that cry again, and she started up in bed, cold and trembling, as it rang through her dream.

It was daybreak. Susan rose and dressed herself in haste. She would go and satisfy the terrible doubts that had possessed her all night. She lighted a fire, prepared her mother's breakfast, and issued quietly from the cottage.

It was a bright morning after the rain. The wind blew freshly up the street, and the March sun, just rising, shone on the house-tops and the distant cliffs with cold, bright rays. Susan turned into the narrow lane that led upwards to the downs, and downwards—by a flight of long stone steps—to the shore. No one was abroad—no one, that is, save two fishermen coming up from the beach, bearing something on their shoulders.

Was it the grave faces of the men, who walked with their eyes cast down, or the strange appearance of the burden they carried, that caused Susan to stop suddenly?

The foremost of the two men, on seeing Susan, lifted up his hand solemnly, and let it fall again by his side. That mute gesture was enough. Susan steadied herself against the wall near, for a sudden dizziness had seized her.

The fishermen drew nearer, silent and slow-footed as before. When a few paces from Susan, they stopped and laid down their burden on the ground; one of them, stooping down, drew aside the sail-cloth they had flung over it.

Merciful God! there, with the early sunshine playing on his face, and the morning wind stirring his long hair, lay Mr Lennox wan and dead.

The men spoke not a word; they took up their burden again, and went on their way in silence. Susan stood, with her face buried in her hands, like one who struggles to awake from some terrible dream.

It was his death-cry, then, she had heard last night; he was the doomed horseman who had passed her on the cliffs. He had asked her the way to the gravel-pits. Was that the place where they were to have met? Yes, and perhaps even now Ellen still waited for him there! As the thought crossed Susan's mind, a sudden hope rose before her.

The gravel-pits lay behind Sandstone, some three miles inland, at a point where the downs swept southwards, into a quiet, secluded valley. Susan knew the spot well; she had often played there as a child.

Ere the blue smoke, curling upwards in the morning air, shewed that the little hamlet had awaked once more to its daily cares and toils, Susan Watson was hastening across the downs. As she trod the still heights where not a sound save the tinkle of the sheep-bells could be heard, Susan prayed, with trembling lips, that she might yet be able to save and reclaim her she sought.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE ENDING OF THE TROUBLES.

It was night, and Jim Bowes sat by Widow Watson's hearth, gazing sadly at the fire; from time to time, the old man heaved a sigh, but he never changed his posture nor raised his head.

'What can have got our Sue, Jim? I'm gettin' sore uneasy 'bout her. It's nigh seven o'clock, and she's been gone ever sin' daybreak, none knows where nor why.'

'Don't fret, mother,' said Jim, gruffly; 'she'll be home soon.'

But another hour passed away, and Susan returned not. Jim Bowes began to look rather uneasy. ''Spose I take a turn on the Lynmouth road. She may have had orders to go up there, and been kep' past time.'

The old sailor rose from his seat, and took up his sou'wester. He was just about to lift the latch and issue out, when there came a low tap at the door. He opened it, and, behold, there stood Susan at the threshold! She held up her finger, to warn Jim to keep silence, and beckoned him out.

'Jim,' said Susan, laying her hand on his arm, and speaking in a low voice, as they stood there together under the stars, 'she's here. Call mother away from the house, while we go in to my chamber. She can't bear the sight o' any one yet.'

Jim returned to the house, and did as Susan had bidden him. Erelong, Susan summoned them in again.

'Thank God, I've lived to see this hour!' she exclaimed, as her mother and the old sailor gazed at her with troubled faces. 'Thank God, I, of all women, found and saved her! Mother, this is as it should be.' The girl spoke with an intensity that shewed how deep and real was the feeling she gave utterance to.

'How did ye know which way she'd gone, Susan?' asked Jim Bowes.

Susan sat in silence for a minute, and then began: 'I'll tell ye, Jim;' and in a few words she told them of the wild cry she had heard, of the strange fears it had given rise to, and the terrible confirmation of these fears the morning had brought with it.

'When I bethought myself of Ellen, and how she was perhaps waiting yonder at the gravel-pits for him whom she'd never see more, I set off, praying

God I might be in time to save her. When I got to the quarries, it nearly broke my heart to see her sitting there on a great stone, wi' her head buried in her hands. I found her in a damp hollow, where the rain had been falling all night long, wan as a ghost, and wi' great black rings round her eyes. She fled away when she saw me, but I followed after her across the downs, and cried out to her to turn back, for the love of God. It must ha' been nigh on noon ere I came up wi' her at last. She had sunk down by the stone-wall of a sheepfold, worn out and spent. "Susan," she said, "let me die! Oh, you've been cruel to follow me thus!" and she lay for some minutes like one dead. Then suddenly she rose, and tried to go on again; but I put my arms about her, and held her back wi' force, praying her to hear me the while.

'I couldn't tell you how she begged me to let her go; I couldn't tell you how heart-broken were her words and looks. We sat there wi' the sun shining above us, and the sheep feeding quietly near, and never two sadder hearts under heaven. But my words had power in 'em—God knows I could speak from bitter experience!—and at last she listened to me. It took a weary time to get her to consent to come back wi' me, but she did so after a while; only she prayed that I'd wait till night had come down, and nobody was about. And so we sat and waited in the hollows, where none could see us; and she lay wi' her head on my shoulder, and I wrapped my shawl about her, for the sun didn't seem to warm her, and she was deathly cold. And as the sun went down—I thought I'd never seen it travel so slow—we drew nearer the village; and at last, when it was quite dark, we crept up to the door unnoticed and unseen. She's sleeping now, poor soul, and to see her worn face, one would say she'll never wake again. Knowing what she has yet to learn, I could a'most wish that it might be death that seems so like it.'

Susan ceased, and they all sat in silence for a minute.

'O mother!' broke out the girl again, clasping her hands together, and speaking in a voice full of emotion, 'she's so young, and so broken down already! It may be my sins and example that have produced such fruits in others. O Lord, grant that this may not be laid to my charge!' and Susan, whose heart had been long surcharged, burst into a passionate flood of tears.

'Tut, tut,' said Jim Bowes in a husky voice; 'don't ye talk so. If ever anybody returned good for evil, it's you, Sue. Thou hast paid back Michael Hawser for all he's done and said against thee, in a way as the Master he serves 'ull find no fault wi'. It's a brave revenge thou'st earned this day, my lass!'

Seven times has the sun risen and set over the earth, and since that fatal night when judgment fell upon him, Michael Hawser has been seen by no eye in Sandstone. From the closed doors and darkened windows of his house, you might tell that some great sorrow brooded there; but only they who know the man who sits within those walls can measure the woe and misery that are hidden under his roof. The tides swell and fall, the great sea flushes or grows gray, but there is neither night nor day for him who sits there gazing at the dead ashes on his hearthstone. No neighbour lifts the latch to offer aid or sympathy; they well know that both the one and the other would be rejected. Michael has ever stood aloof and alone amongst them; he must even do so now.

It is now the seventh night that he has sat there, companionless in his sorrow. Martha lies in the chamber above, sick unto death. Weary and heart-broken, her life flickers towards its close. No one approaches her but their old servant, for Michael's doors are closed against all comers. Jim Bowes even has been denied admittance, and for three nights the old sailor has turned sorrowfully away from the house.

But to-night he is determined to gain an entrance; he brings with him a scrap of paper containing a few tear-blotted lines that he trusts will melt the father's heart. He stands in the little kitchen while Kezia carries the letter to her master, and waits her return with a keen anxiety. The old servant shakes her head sorrowfully as she reappears. 'Maister says he's got no answer to give. O dear, O dear! It 'ud break your heart to see him, Mr Bowes. He sits yonder i' the parlour, growin' grayer and older every hour. He's got the Bible by his side, but not for good or comfort. He took it down that night, soon as he got in, and tore her name out o' the page where all his children's names are entered, and there it lies by his side still.'

'And Martha?' asked Bowes in a low voice.

'She lies quiet on her bed all day, and never murmurs. Hark, that's her knock!'

There was a sound of some one feebly rapping on the floor overhead with a stick. Kezia hastened away, and returned in another minute to say that Martha wished to see Jim, if he would step upstairs. The old sailor took off his hat, and quietly followed his conductress.

''He refuses then, Jim?—he refuses to see her?' exclaimed the sick girl, as the old man approached her bed. 'I know it by the tone of his voice. My hearing is getting keen—very keen.'

Jim gazed in wonder at the pale face and the big, lustrous eyes of the speaker. There was a beauty in Martha's countenance he had never seen there before, but it was of a kind that awed him.

'Yes, Martha, I thought he would ha' yielded, but he ain't. Michael Hawser is a hard-hearted man, though I say it.'

'Jim, the Lord knows his own time! When He sees fit, the rock will be smitten, and the waters flow. I shall live to see that hour, Jim, short as my life will be.'

'Thou thinkest, then, Martha, he'll give in?' inquired the old sailor sadly.

'I *know* it, Jim. Ere I go, I shall see them stand by my bedside. Tell her that I say it, and my words are true! Tell her, that without this I couldn't lie here calmly as now I lie, waiting for the end!'

And it came to pass as Martha said. The barriers within which that proud heart had intrenched itself were suddenly borne down. Sitting by his hearth next night, Michael Hawser was summoned to his daughter's chamber.

'Father!' cried the girl, raising herself from her pillow, and looking at him with a gaze that pierced him—'father! I've sent for her to my bedside. I must see you brought together ere I die. Hush! I hear them on the way.'

She held up her finger, and listened. But the voice of the rising tide was the only sound Michael heard.

There was a pause, during which Martha's lips moved as in prayer, and then there came the noise of footsteps outside the house.

The door opened, and three figures stood on the threshold; the next moment, the sisters were locked in each other's arms. Michael gazed at his children with a wintry face.

'Martha, tell him to speak to me—to look at me!' moaned the weeping figure by the bedside.

But Michael neither stirred nor spoke. Jim Bowes's lips quivered as he looked at him.

'Michael!' he whispered, in a low tone, 'Michael! ye hear her? Speak, then, speak!'

Not a muscle stirred in that gray, furrowed face.

'Father! has the Lord borne wi' us all these years, and cannot we bear wi' one another's infirmities! For the love of Him you serve, speak a kind word to her!'

But Michael still stood there, silent and stony-eyed as before. In the pause that followed Martha's words, the swell of the rising tide was audible; that, and the ticking of Jim Bowes's big watch, were the only sounds.

Then there rose a clear and solemn voice through the silence of that chamber, '*With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged.*'

The words came from the bed; there sat Martha with a face beaming with supernatural lustre.

A tremor passed over Michael's frame at that sound; a long, low sigh escaped his lips. He stood as before, but muttering to himself in a blank, dreamy way: 'Sixty years—sixty years! A blind leader of the blind! a sinner guiding sinners!'

Standing thus, like one awakening from a trance, a light touch was laid upon his coat, and Ellen fell sobbing at his feet.

'Not there!' he cried, with a guilty start—'not there, my child!'

He raised her in his arms, the clouds breaking from his face, and Ellen wept upon his bosom.

'Father!' cried that solemn voice once more, 'look! there stands Susan Watson. 'Twas she who saved and brought her back to us. Turn round, and clasp her hand in yours, ere I die!'

Michael Hawser held out his hand, and said in a low voice: 'Susan, I ask thy pardon for the wrongs I've done thee. Thou art a better Christian than I.'

'God bless thee for them words, Michael!' exclaimed Jim Bowes solemnly.

And the last sight that Martha's dying eyes beheld, was her father sinking on his knees by her bedside, and crying humbly: 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'

COMMERCIAL ENVELOPES.

The subject of commercial envelopes, by which term we mean anything in which the objects of commerce and the products of industry are packed for the customer, is one of vast comprehensiveness. We do not pretend to deal with it in its amplitude, but shall confine our remarks to some branches of it which are more or less familiar to most of us in our own dwellings, or in the shops we frequent. The perfection to which these gratuitous additions to a bargain have arrived in our day is perhaps not a thing to congratulate ourselves upon, but there are some things worth noticing connected with it, and we may spend a few minutes not unprofitably in cursorily glancing them over.

Passing along one of the manufacturing outskirts or by-ways of Manchester, of Bristol, or of Whitechapel, you are suddenly startled by a splitting, crashing sound of disastrous portent, as though Milo were rending the oak whose rebound should grip him fast, at your very elbow. Enter the open door of that tumble-down shed whence the dire note proceeds, and you may witness the first step in the formation of one of the commonest and most universal phases of the commercial envelope. Common and simple as it is, however, it is not to be despised, for the manufacture here going forward furnishes throughout the kingdom employment for thousands of industrious persons—almost of the lowest class, it is true, but who must yet be employed and fed—and supplies the materials of labour for other classes besides. Half-buried in the ground, and littered with dust-coal and shavings, lies a small rotatory steam-engine, which spits, and sputters, and fumes as though it were as much as ever it could do to drive the odd-looking machine to which it supplies the vital energy. This machine, though it does not look like it, is nothing more than a monster jack-plane, and the sole business of its iron life is to plane shavings of a definite thickness, graduated according to the purposes for which they are required, from beams of pine-wood varying in length from two or three to five or six feet, and in width from five or six to eighteen or twenty inches. The machine, in the hands of a couple of lads, throws off the shavings much faster than the steam-saw would cut them, and turns out one-third more in quantity of the scabbards or shavings, because it wastes no part of the timber in saw-dust. Now, it is from scabbards thus produced that all that various species of the commercial envelope which embraces band-boxes, hat-boxes, toy-boxes, wafer-boxes, lozenge-boxes, and no end of boxes besides, have to be manufactured. A most monstrous proportion of this kind of material goes to the hat-boxes, because every man or boy who buys a hat, though it cost him but a crown, gets it sent home in a box, free of additional charge. The making of these boxes is the work of women and children; it is paid at a rate which would appear ridiculous if it were set down, yet the employment is eagerly accepted, and frequently falls into the hands of labourers' wives and families desirous of adding to the weekly income. A thicker scabbard than that of the hat-box supplies the place of mill-board in the bonnet-box of the servant-maid, which one sees, adorned with a thunder-cloud pattern, perambulating the streets of London to the tune of 'Buy a bau-au-auks—buy a bonnet-baux,' in prodigious clusters of a score each on the shoulders of the hawkers. The best and soundest scabbards are selected for those boxes used by toymen, stationers, and others, which, without either lining or covering, have yet to be made compact, and, to a certain extent, durable. For the smaller boxes, round or oval, destined to carry the pills of the quack-doctor, or the miraculous cough-lozenges at two-and-nine, or the 'delectables' of the druggist, a sound, thin scabbard is chosen, struck from willow-wood of a fine fibre. The making of this latter kind of boxes is a regular trade, has to be learned thoroughly, and necessitates, moreover, the use of some very ingenious implements which we need not here describe. One seat of this trade is Norwich, Macclesfield is another, and others are scattered about in various counties. Boxes of scabbard, even of a size less than an inch in diameter, are made at a profit, though they are sold at a shilling a gross. A superior box adapted to the same uses, but produced at greater cost, is made by the turner, who also selects the wood of the willow-branch, for the closeness of its fibre and its easy softness in the lathe.

It is the paper-maker, however, who is the great source of the commercial envelope. This is apparent in almost every shop-window. The dress-boxes, cap-boxes, flower-boxes, pattern-boxes, lace-boxes, and all that legion of envelopes of every shape and size, devoted to feminine mysteries, are made of paper, or the material of paper in some of its numberless forms, such as card-board, mill-board, &c. There is no limit to articles of this description; they are infinite in variety, and the demand for them is ever on the increase. It is this demand, more than anything else, which has given rise to the numberless inventions and improvements which, during the last twenty years, have marked the manufacture of fancy papers of every hue, pattern, and texture. The most exquisite produce of the paper-mill will always be found in the hands of the paper-box makers—the finest and whitest sheet, either plain, or grained, or embossed, with the most elaborate designs, or spread with gorgeous arabesques and radiant with gold. The consumption of these costly materials by the box-makers is enormous, and it is astonishing, considering the outlay they must incur for them, at what a low rate the boxes are supplied to the wholesale consumers. The cheapness can only be referred to the large numbers fabricated of the same pattern. If a calculation is made, it will be found that the price bears no apparently remunerative proportion to the labour, being often but a small percentage upon the cost of the material. This percentage would of course increase with the decrease in the size of the article; but the increase is not much, as may be seen from the following example. Before us lies a circular box, two inches in diameter, and two-thirds of an inch in depth—the cover fitting upon a central shaft, and ranging flush with the body of the box. It is made of the finest card-board, covered outside with a pattern of richest design in green, crimson, and gold, and is bound with four fillets of gold paper, each fillet overlapping one of the four circular edges of box and cover. The box is made to a perfection almost microscopic, and without a flaw, and is a master-piece of minute ingenious work, upon which a clever artisan might reasonably pride himself; yet the maker will supply these boxes at the charge, including material, of 4s. 9d. the gross, or less than a halfpenny each; and, what is more, he will pay his hands three shillings a day for their assistance in making them.

It is in the department of paper-boxes and envelopes of various kinds that the pictorial element comes into play. We have it on very good authority, that none of the late pleasing discoveries in chromo-typography, chromo-lithography, and block-printing in colours, would have remunerated their inventors and professors, but for the use to which their products are applied by the makers of paper-boxes and ornamental wrappers of different kinds. The perfumer, the fancy-stationer, the lace-man, the glove-maker, are the real wholesale patrons of the above novel and beautiful arts, and not the public who admire their *chefs-d'œuvre* in the shop-windows, but rarely purchase. It is not by the sale of his *chef-d'œuvre* that the chromotographer is paid, but by the sale of tens and hundreds of thousands of small coloured designs and vignettes, which are in demand to envelop the scents, the soaps, the cutlery, the conserves, the toilet-gear of the ladies, or the choice filigree stationery they use, or the presents they select for their juvenile friends. A chromo-typographist of long standing tells us that, for every picture of his production which sells *as* a picture, a hundred at least are nominally given away as part and parcel of the envelope to some kind of merchandise. This luxurious species of envelope originated many years ago in Paris, and it is there that the manufacture has been most sedulously cultivated. For years the finest specimens of lithography, produced from designs by the best artists, being first delicately coloured, were applied to the ornamentation of glove-boxes, lace-boxes, conserve and bonbon boxes; and a prodigious number of them were imported by our own manufacturers and tradesmen, and were to be seen plentifully displayed in the London shop-windows. The art of chromotography, however, which first became a trade in London, interfered with the Parisian manufacture; it was far easier to print in colours from blocks by the typographic press, than to print lithographs and to colour them afterwards. The French box-makers at first imported the English coloured pictures, and attached them to their own wares. This did not last long. The French printers experimented for themselves, and soon produced chromotypes of their own fully equal to the English ones in execution, and superior in design. It is doubtful, however, if they excel us at present in this class of commercial envelope, although they can and do produce both chromotypes and chromoliths of great beauty, and sell those of a large size at less than a fourth of the price demanded for them by the London publishers. Our traders and dealers in every species of luxurious trifle are now fully aware of the importance of the envelope as a medium of sale, and they leave no stone unturned in their efforts to render it attractive.

A rival of the paper-box maker is the worker in metal. The thinnest sheet or film of lead, or tin, or brass, or bronze, may be pressed into the form of a box and its cover, with an endless variety of pattern. Birmingham produces millions of these metal boxes, which serve as envelopes for more species of merchandise than we care to mention—from pennyworths of paste-blacking in tin, to gilt pens by the dozen or the gross, or wax vestas by the hundred or the thousand. Many of these are exceedingly handsome and well designed, and it is said that a novel idea in this direction often brings more to its originator, than the discovery of some new principle in machinery, or the invention of an engine that astonishes the whole scientific world.

The glass-blower is another important agent in the fabrication of commercial envelopes. The dealers in scents and odours know full well that it is the bottle, more than anything else, which recommends and sells the perfume; and they spend infinitely more time and trouble, and, it is whispered, capital too, in elaborating a new toilet-bottle, than they do in the composition of its contents. A delicious scent, the 'extract of a thousand flowers,' may be concocted from essence of lavender, a modicum of Eau de Cologne, and a *soupçon* of attar of roses, homœopathically diffused in an ocean of *aqua pura*—and may be varied *ad infinitum* by the least change in the ingredients; but the bottle which is to glitter on the toilet-table, demands all the genius of the artist and the skill of the craftsman. It is here the grand difficulty lies—to achieve a two-ounce bottle of classical design toned down to the modern standard of dressing-room elegance; that is a triumph accorded to few; he is a lucky man indeed who can accomplish it, and may reckon upon an influx of profit compared to which cent. per cent. is mere zero. It is astonishing what an amount of ingenuity is expended in this business; he who would form a notion of it must make a study of the shop-windows and glass-cases of some of the first-class London perfumers, and note the perplexing variety of forms into which the yielding glass has been turned, and twisted, and moulded, and compressed, ere it was annealed and subjected to the cutting-wheel. More devices than were ever dreamed of by the old Venetians are successfully carried out by the modern glass-blowers; but, alas! against all their convulsive strainings after elegance, comes in the necessity for the indispensable stopper, which cannot be got rid of, and generally defeats the best intentions.

The potter is in still greater request than the glass-blower among a certain class of dealers. Not to mention the various descriptions of jars and earthen bottles which he makes for trade purposes, there is a shallow pot and cover, varying in diameter from two inches, or less, to eight inches, or more, and formed of every species of ceramic compound, from plainest delf to finest porcelain, the demand for which is almost incredible at certain seasons. Some time ago, we saw them making in the potteries by means of steam-machinery, which turned them out ready for the oven almost as fast as the beats of an average pendulum-clock; and even with this machine the maker found it difficult to keep pace with the orders continually coming in. They are in use for no end of purposes, and vary proportionably in price, according to their material and workmanship. Of those made of the plain white ware, a vast number become the deposits of pomatums, hair-paste, cold-cream, bears-grease, and so on. A larger size, made of the same ware, but bearing on the cover copies of works of art transferred from copper-plates, neatly coloured, and then burned in the kiln, is used by hundreds of thousands to contain preserved and highly seasoned meats, anchovies, game, and other kinds of appetising relishes for the breakfast-table. And lastly, those of china or porcelain ware, moulded with greater care and sharpness, and delicately painted by hand with groups of flowers or small landscapes, are used either for costly confections by the pastry-cook, or for some still more costly toilet mystery concocted by the perfumer. These pots, including all the various sorts and sizes, are manufactured by millions, and seeing that they are not a very destructible article, for they are more than double the thickness of ordinary china-ware, the wonder is, what becomes of them all.

We shall notice but one other form of the commercial envelope, and that is, perhaps, of all, the most expensive. The morocco case, lined with silk velvet, is the envelope of the jeweller. The gold watch, the diamond ring, the bracelet, the gem, are presented to the buyer in a morocco case, which, however costly it may be in itself, forms a very trifling item in the bill. The manufacture of these is a trade of considerable importance, in which much capital is invested, and much skill employed. As a craft, it requires as much ingenuity as that of the bookbinder, and it is said to be better paid; but it is one liable to utter stagnation in seasons of commercial depression, and its artisans are often out of employ.

We have been obliged to pass over a great number of articles which would come under the designation of commercial envelopes, because the bare mention of the whole would exceed our limits. There are the paper-bags of the grocer, the baker, and the confectioner, which are literally manufactured daily by the ton-weight; there are the canvas-bags of the grain-factors and of the seedsmen, for holding samples; there are the barrels of the oyster-merchants—the hampers of the dry-store keepers—and fifty things besides which would go to swell the catalogue.

Now, all these things, from the coarsest to the costliest, are nominally given away: no charge is ever made for them to the retail customer. Their production must keep some tens of thousands of persons in constant employment, and yet the produce is practically next to nothing, because the articles are comparatively of little use. The plainest envelope would answer all the purposes of the most luxurious and ornamental one, with a single exception—it *would not sell* the article. That is the key to the whole business, and it suggests one consideration worth remarking; namely, that the outside aspect of certain goods, in the popular estimate, weighs more than the goods themselves—the decorated packing-case surpasses its contents—the shell excels the kernel. We commend this consideration to the customer.

A PURSUIT OF SCIENCE UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

EARLY in the year 1847, Gaetano Osculati, a native of Milan, and a member of the Geographical Society of Paris, left Panama with the intention of exploring the remoter regions of that republic. His journey from Quito to Archidona and to the river Napo was singularly adventurous, and his individual courage equally remarkable.

Osculati left Quito upon the 7th of June 1847. He had intrusted part of his baggage to a troop of Indians bound for the river Napo, but who declined to defer their departure even for two days, fearing a then prevailing disease at Quito, fatal to their race.

The traveller held a government order for baggage-bearers (*cargueros*) at Tombacho. On his arrival at that place, he found the inhabitants were celebrating the festival of the Corpus Christi; and as no one would start until the termination of the solemnity, he was compelled to remain there for several days. This fête, as practised here, involves many strange rites. The population of the surrounding country crowd the village; the days pass in riot and drunkenness; the principal square is adorned with triumphal arches, decked with flowers and fruit; and in the midst are suspended living rabbits and kids. The animals, writhing in agony under the scorching sun, utter pitiful cries. They are brought by the native Indians as an offering; and they are left for the clergy, who carry them off in the evening. Bull-fights, masquerades, and fireworks, follow; and the festival concludes by a procession led by dancers tricked out in gaudy feathers.

Osculati lost all patience with this protracted mummery, and proceeded to Papellcata before the termination of the fête. This place lies upon the bank of a lake of the same name; and he hoped there to rejoin the Indians who had preceded him with his baggage, and to meet those whom the alcaid of the village of Tombacho had promised to despatch to join him. The former had departed before his arrival—the latter had not arrived. Upon the 16th of June they appeared; the small caravan immediately set out for Archidona, travelling by a narrow path hardly discernible, where even a mule could not venture; and all the baggage was thus necessarily carried by men. Their laborious journey lay through clay and water up to the knees—through the briers and reeds of untrodden forests, over slippery mountain-paths, through dangerous fords. The allowance of food was scanty; and at night the only shelter was a wretched covering of branches and leaves, open to every shower, and to all the winds of heaven.

All this discomfort, however, would have been immaterial, could the traveller have trusted to the fidelity of his guides; he had, unfortunately, reason to believe that they were looking out for an opportunity to abandon him; and his anticipation was too well founded.

An ominous incident occurred as the traveller passed the marshy forest of Berro-Taca: whilst the band was entangled amidst the tall reeds which impeded their advance, he heard a sudden cry: 'A dead man—a dead man!' He hurried on, and discovered the dead body of an Indian lying with the face to the ground. He turned the body over, and recognised it as that of one of the *cargueros* who had preceded him. He had been seized with sudden illness by the way; his savage companions had abandoned him when he could proceed no further, and had hung his burden upon the branch of an adjoining tree. The sight of the body threw the Indians into a state of absolute terror, which they did not even endeavour to conceal. They were constantly calling to one another, kept close together when they could, and shuddered at every cry which they heard in the woods. At this moment, they pitilessly resolved upon the destruction of their employer. Osculati, in dread of such a fate, walked always in the rear with a double-barrelled gun, and a brace of pistols, ready for the first man who should attempt to fly.

The first symptoms of insubordination appeared at Baeza, a city in ancient times, but now a mere solitary cabin, inhabited by a poor family, who maintain themselves by disposing of food and other articles to the Indians passing by that route. When, after a day's rest, it was necessary to leave this place, a thousand pretexts were urged by the Indians for discontinuing the journey. Osculati was inflexible. The leader declared that he would not travel upon a fête-day, and that the white man would certainly meet with some misfortune if he persisted in doing so. The white man's reply was a threat of personal chastisement unless he was instantly obeyed. The Indians doggedly lifted the baggage, and proceeded for a few hundred yards, when one of them fell, uttering loud cries. It was impossible to force him to stand, and he was left behind.

The Rio Vermejo was passed without difficulty. This river is so called from the purity and beautiful colour of its waters. Osculati here shot a large black bear, and distributed the flesh among his attendants. They were apparently more cheerful; and under more favourable auspices, the party encamped upon the banks of the Cosanga. The river was so swollen by the rains and melting snow, that it was impossible to ford it at the usual spot, and a long and laborious circuit was made, in hopes of discovering some other ford which might admit of their passage. In this fruitless search, two or three harassing days were spent, and now the Indians openly discovered their designs. On one night, the half of the smoked bear, which had been reserved as provision for the journey, was stolen. On another, Osculati observed, to his astonishment, that his cabin had been constructed with unusual care; indeed, its partitions were so fastened up that he could not see through them. He knew the motive of this excessive attention. He asked the leader for an explanation. 'That the master may sleep better,' was the ready reply. Osculati tore down the partition, and flung it out of the cabin.

Upon the 24th of June, the river had considerably fallen, and our traveller proceeded with the leader and another Indian to look out for a ford. He had not traversed the bank for a few yards, when he perceived that the leader had disappeared. The other Indian could not accompany him, as Osculati had kept him close to his side. He instantly returned to his cabin, where he found that the whole band had made off, with his provision and the greater part of his clothes. The one Indian who remained seemed moved by his critical situation, and offered any assistance. Osculati resolved to despatch him to the governor of Archidona with a letter imploring aid. The Indian undertook the mission, and pledged himself to return in six or seven days; he asked payment in advance, and permission to defer his departure till the next morning, as he was afraid of wild beasts during the night. Osculati yielded both points. That night, however, the vagabond fled, and rejoined his companions, who were obviously waiting for him at some distance.

Our traveller is now alone, in the midst of a desert, ignorant of his course, in the twofold imminent peril of being destroyed during the night by wild beasts, or assassinated by the Indians, and with the horror of famine appallingly before him. He thus tells his own story:

'On my return to the cabin, not observing the Indian, I called out several times, calling him by his name as loudly as I could. It was in vain. I was alone—absolutely alone: he, too, had forsaken me, carrying with him the net which held the remnant of my provisions, and was far off in the woods in the direction of Baeza!

'I composed myself, however, and submitting to my misfortune, I only thought of repairing my cabin, already half-destroyed by the wind. To this object I devoted the intervals of favourable weather. I strengthened it, as I best could, with poles and cords. I then constructed around it a barricade of reeds, of branches, and thorns, that I might not be surprised during my sleep, and might have time to stand on my defence, either against wild beasts or against the Indians, who might have been hidden in the woods, awaiting an opportunity to assassinate me. I then loaded my gun and pistols; I attached the point of a spear to a long bamboo, for use in case of need; and after a wretched repast of biscuit and water, I lay down to sleep upon my baggage. About ten o'clock I rose, and going beyond the palisade, inspected the adjoining ground, to discover if any one lay in concealment. I fired two shots in the direction of the wood, as well to drive away the bears and jaguars, as to intimate to the Indians who might be harbouring there that I was in a condition to defend myself. The darkness was profound: nothing could be seen beyond a hand-length; torrents of rain were falling. I eagerly longed for the return of light. At midnight, I again fired twice; and at six o'clock in the morning, as soon as the day dawned, I took a little coffee, which the Indians had fortunately left me, I suppose because they did not consider it palatable.' The traveller determined to remain in this miserable hovel for six or seven days, in the hope that some Indian might pass and assist him. He set apart, in very limited rations, the small store of biscuit that remained to him, that he might be assured of the means of subsistence during the period he had fixed. He then patiently waited the result. Will it be credited, that in such circumstances he had sufficient resolution to search for insects, and actually to collect some of very curious kinds!

'Upon the 27th,' he continues, 'it rained incessantly all day; the river was gradually rising; I could not kindle a fire. The courage which had sustained me until this moment was giving way to despair. During the night, I was suddenly awakened by a sound which proceeded from the depths of the forest; it approached me nearer and nearer. In a few moments I perceived, at a short distance from my enclosure, a dark object advancing towards me. Although the night was very dark, I concluded that it must be a tapir, from the heavy tread and the strong breathing of an animal gifted with the sense of smell. My delight was unbounded; but the dread of losing the animal caused me such emotion that I was actually obliged to lean against the tree which supported the cabin before I could discharge my barrels. To my extreme satisfaction, the second shot brought him down. I was certain that I had killed him; but feeling my strength insufficient to drag him to the cabin, I returned to my narrow bed, happy in the thought that I had secured the means of subsistence for a long time. It was long ere I could sleep, agitated as I had been by a thousand emotions. My joy was of brief duration.

'On awakening next morning at five o'clock, I found that the river had suddenly risen. The waters had reached the cabin. I had just time to drag my boxes into the wood. The current had already carried away some articles which had been left outside the cabin; the tapir, too, had disappeared.

'The rain continued to fall more heavily. The howling of the storm, and the noise of the waters as they broke upon the rocks, produced a mournful and monotonous sound, increased by frequent volcanic discharges. It may be easily understood what a melancholy impression such a scene must have produced upon a man enfeebled by hunger and watching.'

Anticipating death, the traveller wrote his last wishes, and addressed a letter to the president of the republic. He attached the papers to a long pole, at the top of which he hung a handkerchief, like a flag. After ten days of sickening expectation, he recognised the necessity of proceeding in one direction or another. He ultimately resolved to endeavour to reach Archidona by swimming. He divided his remaining provision into two portions—the one to carry with him, the other to leave at the hut, that he might not risk his entire stock in this dangerous venture. He collected his most valuable articles, his watch, silver, and compass, and unhesitatingly plunged into the Cosanga. The agitated waters cast him back; his strength was insufficient to grapple with them. In the attempt, he lost the half of his provisions and both his pistols. The only alternative now open to him was to return to Baeza, and this he accomplished after prodigious toil, on the most scanty food, and without assistance of any description whatever.

He proceeds: 'Three days after leaving Cosanga, having passed a night upon the sands, for I had not strength to erect a cabin, I had the utmost difficulty in getting upon my feet; their bleeding wounds prevented me from walking freely. The idea, however, that in one day I might reach Baeza, overmastered the pain, and I laboured on, summoning to my aid all the energy I yet possessed.

'I had eaten my last biscuit the day before; two handfuls of roasted maize was all my remaining food. I traversed the woods and morasses with great difficulty, cutting a path through the impeding thickets. I was covered with mud; and was frequently compelled to crawl upon my hands and feet beneath the reeds which were stretching crosswise above me, lest I should lose myself. I had toiled on until four o'clock, without encountering any object which could lead me to think that I was approaching Baeza. My strength was absolutely prostrate. I feared that I might be unable to arrive within reach of assistance that night; I therefore only ate thirty grains of maize, and reserved the remainder for the following day. I sat down upon the trunk of a tree, and cursing my ill-fortune, thought of once more constructing a cabin, when I heard the distant crowing of a cock. Trembling lest I should be deceived, I stretched out my ears, and held in my breath. In a few moments, the sound again reached me. My shattered courage rises on the instant; I am alive again; and flinging myself on my knees, I cry out: "I am saved! God of mercy, I thank thee!"'

He had indeed reached Baeza, ghastly attenuated, helpless, but safe. He thence proceeded, or rather was carried to Archidona, where he was received and treated with the greatest consideration and kindness. After many other adventures, he reached his own country in safety, bringing with him information as to several animals hitherto unknown, and twenty-five new specimens of the insect tribes.

HOW TO WIN AT ÉCARTÉ.

The season was not quite over, but the weather was getting very hot, the small-talk very stale, and all the highest matrimonial prizes were drawn, and the lovers of white-bait began to find the bouquet of the Thames overpower that of their claret, when I began to feel a longing for purling streams, and loose coats, and al-fresco concerts, and colonnades, where you can sip ices and smoke cigars alternately, under the influence of a band good enough to listen to when you are disinclined to talk; and being an idle man 'on town,' I made up my mind to go to Baden, and enjoy all these things. An idle man, did I say? Get an Italian over to London; take him to Tattersall's in the morning, and set him to work on the arithmetical process of making a book; hurry him home; make him dress himself up to the nth, and drive him off to a flower-show, where employ him for a couple of hours in strolling about and suppressing his yawns; rattle him back to town; cause him to re-dress himself, and take him to a dinner-party, where he has to drag conversation uphill; when he is beginning to feel at his ease, hurry him off to the Opera, and when nearly exhausted, transplant him to a drawing-room thirty feet by fifteen, into which some three hundred people are endeavouring to wedge their poor palpitating, perspiring persons; cause him to dance in the middle of this mass, and then seat him for a quarter of an hour by the side of a young lady whose powers of conversation are limited, and who is anxiously looking out for some one who has not yet arrived. When you see that his powers of endurance have been taxed to the utmost, carry him to the club, and make him play at billiards. At breakfast on the following morning tell him that the day before was devoted to idleness!

Well, though not understanding the *dolce far niente*, I was lazy according to my lights, and had no fixed occupation to bind me to one place more than another, so I wrote off to a German friend, who always summered at Baden, to secure me my accustomed lodgings, and walked down to the Salt-tax Office—my friend Foxey, who was a clerk there, having expressed a desire to accompany me, should the period of his annual holiday coincide with that of my journey. A sharp fellow was Foxey, who played a good hand at whist, could drive a hard bargain, was a good judge of a horse, and not a bad one of a man, but who, after the proverbial manner of very sharp people, occasionally 'cut himself;' for so firmly was he convinced that it was utterly impossible that any one should ever take him in, that he occasionally omitted to take those precautions against such an accident which would never have been forgotten by a man of less self-confidence.

On reaching Somerset House, I passed into an outer office which was deserted, but from an inner room issued a silvery tinkling which gave my patriotic soul a shudder. They were doubtless counting up the spoils torn from their burdened country; and, hark! a burst of laughter. The wretches were gloating over their prey. With an indignant hand, I opened the door, and saw—piles of silver and rouleaux of gold, and triumphant demons weighing it by the bushel? No; five shillings on a table, round which were grouped as many fashionably dressed young men, engaged in a highly interesting and intellectual game, which consists in putting down one shilling, and trying to cover it with another placed in the palm of the hand, and propelled by a sudden jerk of the fingers under the edge of the table.

'Pardon an idle man for breaking in upon your abstruse studies, gentlemen,' said I, 'but I have something of importance to speak about to my friend Foxey here.'

'Oh, don't apologise,' cried the Hon. Arthur Youngersun. 'We are worked awfully hard sometimes, but there happens to be nothing to do to-day.'

Somehow I was always lucky enough to hit upon similar days for a visit to any friend in that department.

'Something important!' cried Foxey, turning pale; 'anything wrong with *Antelope?*'

'O no. As far as I know, *Antelope's* lungs and legs are as sound and swift as those of the animal he is named after. I have only called to say that I am going to Baden this week. Can you get away?'

Foxey's face fell.

'Oh, bother!' said he; 'and here have I been taking no end of pains to persuade Spooner, who came into the office last winter, to take his holiday first. He did not like going away in the height of the season, but I made him believe that London was always decimated by cholera in July, and got wholesome again in August, and—and, in short, he will not be back for another fortnight.'

So it was agreed that I should go on alone to Baden, and that Foxey should join me there; and I went home and packed what articles I could not possibly do without in a portmanteau; got various ambassadors to take a sight at my passport; made a circular-note arrangement with my banker—a round-about way of transacting money-matters, but convenient; read the paper from London to Folkestone; smoked from Folkestone to Boulogne; slept from Boulogne to Paris, where I halted two days to see a new vaudeville, some fireworks, and a change of dynasty; talked violently with one of the ex-government from Paris to Strasbourg, where, the principal hotel being full, I had to—no, not *sleep*—lie awake and scratch at an *auberge*, where I got a wonderful bill in the morning. It was composed in French, but written in German character; the items were in francs, the total in thalers, and it was brought to me when the diligence was at the door. I deciphered it afterwards, and may mention as a sample, that having had a *petit verre* with my coffee, I was charged for a bottle of brandy.

The annoyance arising from this incident was soon forgotten, however, for that very morning I was 'on the Rhine;' and the memory of that day and the next is a pleasant vision of diorama, tobacco, and thin white wine—for the Thames, and the Rhine, and the Cam never lose their charm for me. Then came a little bit of railway, and I was at Baden.

A delightful place is Baden, all mountain, river, sunshine, wood, music, laughing, dancing, singing, feasting; the very Garden of Armida, the kingdom of Pleasure. Unavoidable business is carried on in a fancy-fair fashion; the shops are booths, and the damsels who serve them look so smiling and happy that you might easily imagine them to be young ladies at a bazaar playing at shopwomen, an idea their theory of charges, and the change they give, do not tend to dispel.

The principal charm of the place is, that it is so disreputable; one feels one's morals relax before one has been in it half an hour. Whether the hot springs, for which it is famous, well-up from the regions of naughtiness, or whether conscience is a contraband article, seized at the frontier, certain it is that what one turns nose and eyes up at in England, seems all right here. Sir William and Lady Squaretoes, who are bitter enough on the subject of opening the Crystal Palace on Sundays, and who lock up all novels, newspapers, and children's toys on Saturday night at home, by no means make a Sabbath of the first day of the week at Baden. Mr and Mrs Jones are much shocked at the idea of betting-houses when in London, but they see no harm in a little quiet turn at the roulette-table here. And oh, Mr Starcher! if your wife, children, venerable butler, and friends in general could only see you smiling, chatting, nay, O Penates! *dancing* with that Mademoiselle Laretta! The fact is, things do not look wrong when they are done in the broad glare of day, and nobody seems ashamed of it, since ninety-nine human beings out of a hundred are moral chameleons, and take their colouring from those around them. Gambling? Pooh! gambling is something illegal, committed after midnight with closed doors, upon tables which sink through the floor when you touch a spring; and gamblers are individuals with haggard eyes, who amuse themselves by tearing their hair, and making use of much bad language; whereas these ladies and gentlemen are quite calm, and smiling, and polite, and evidently look upon those pieces of gold they are staking as so many counters. And for any little flirtations which may be going on, they are no doubt quite harmless. Pooh, pooh! this is fairy-land, and fairies are not to be judged by the same rigid code which is binding on men and women.

There were several young Englishmen staying at Baden: a captain in the Guards; an ex-hussar, who had lately sold out on coming into a property which he was now going out of as fast as he conveniently could; two or three barristers who did not practise, and a couple of billiard-players who did; with several others whom some of us would have cut most decidedly on the other side of the Channel, but with whom we were on terms of almost affectionate friendship here. We hired a house, and formed a sort of club, for admission into which there was not even the pretence of a ballot, and which soon became cosmopolitan. First came an Austrian nobleman; then a Dutch officer, who was always dressed in full uniform; then a very rich Russian; and then, the ice being fairly broken, a crowd of foreigners tumbled in, French, German, Italian, some of them of doubtful reputation and hawkish appearance, but all of them delightful companions at table. 'Above all things,' as a lively little Parisian said, 'it is necessary to amuse one's self;' and I regret to say that was all he thought about. Of these suspicious gentlemen, the Chevalier Carvajal enjoyed the worst character, which was a pity, too, for he was an elegant and accomplished man of about fifty, whom you would never have suspected of a dishonourable thought had you been left to your own unbiassed judgment.

Report said that he had been rich when a young man; had lost his fortune at the gaming-table, and now lived by the amusement which had ruined him. And certainly, though he never put himself prominently forward, he was always to be found where play was going on, ready to engage anybody at any game, for any stakes, and with invariable success, which was, to say the least of it, singular.

Our club was, I fear, rather a dissipated institution; we had four rooms—one for papers, another for billiards, a third for whist, and the large salon for lansquenet and faro, all of which were deserted and dull up to eleven o'clock at night, when the Cursaal closed, and the members strolled in to finish the evening, which was often endowed with such a protracted vitality that it was daylight before we could despatch it. We generally played at lansquenet, a game in which we fondly flattered ourselves our sharper brethren could get no unfair advantage over us; and yet the Chevalier Carvajal always had a run of luck when he got the deal, so that we acquired a habit of staking very sparingly when it came to his turn, a tacit method of calling him rogue, which had not the slightest effect on his equanimity: he smiled, shrugged his shoulders, and as he could not get large profits out of us, contented himself with little ones.

But the chevalier's favourite game was écarté, though, after the first week, no one would engage him at it.

'Revenge! I rather imagine that would be like punching my own head for running up against a wall,' metaphysically remarked young Tomkins, the last écarté victim, paying his money, but by no means 'looking pleasant.'

'As you please, monsieur. You should practise. I certainly play a leetle too well for you.'

'Play well! I don't see any good play in always turning up the king at the critical point of the game!'

I was the only English bystander, and in an agony lest there should be a quarrel and a duel, for the lad would be sure to fix upon me as his second, and I hate a disturbance of any kind, from a cross wife to a barrel-organ; but the chevalier smiled as if a compliment had been paid him.

Poor Tomkins was an undergraduate of nineteen, spending his long vacation at Baden, and I daily hoped he would use all his money, and have to go home; anything rather than pursue his studies in moral science in our society; but the Old Gentleman gave him a run of luck at roulette, so he stopped on, and learned daily how to fit himself better for the patronage. Poor Tomkins! he was a weak youth, with a wonderful reverence for men of fashion; and to see his gods—to know some of whom at home he would have given his ears—associating daily on terms of equality with blacklegs and swindlers, must have had a fine bracing effect on his moral constitution. I have never heard of him since; I wonder if he is doing anything in the penal servitude line.

A fortnight soon slipped by, and Foxey arrived, full of health and spirits; indeed, it made me quite regret being an idle man to see how he enjoyed getting away from his accustomed desk. He went into ecstasies about everything—the beauty of the scenery and of the ladies, the cookery at the table d'hôte, the excellence of the wines and music, and the genial good-for-nothingness of our club; only he was particularly anxious to know who all the members were, having a foible for that sort of biography, which, in this instance, it was very difficult for me to gratify.

'Who is this Chevalier Carvajal? Not know? Why, I declare you know nobody. Cannot one find out? Is there no foreign *Burke?* There ought to be, just the same as a foreign *Bradshaw.*' Thus my friend attacked me on the third day after his arrival.

'Perhaps he would not be in it, if there was one,' I replied.

'Eh, what!' Foxey cried. 'He must be a somebody, you know, or why should they call him chevalier?'

'I really do not know; perhaps he is a *chevalier d'industrie.* You certainly had better not play with him at cards.'

'What! that respectable old gentleman'——

'Always wins—perhaps fairly, still no one likes to encounter him.'

'Ah! I must try my strength with him: he will have a tough job to take *me* in. But how comes he, with such a character, to be a member of the club?'

'Every man is a gentleman here who has pretty good-manners and pays his way; besides, there is no proof against the chevalier—he is a great deal too clever to let himself be found out.'

'Humph! we shall see.'

From this time forward it was evident that Foxey's maggot was biting him, and that he was determined either to win a victory from this lucky gamester, or, by exposing his tricks, to drive him from the field. Every one, you see, has his or her little ambition, and Foxey's was to be esteemed an acuter fellow than any of his contemporaries: Talleyrand's ambition on a small scale, in fact. So he was continually inviting the chevalier to play at different games with him for small stakes, and—as it was not worth that individual's while to shew his game for a franc—with occasional success.

'Ah, you see, he dare not try any tricks on with *me,*' my friend would then remark; 'he feels *my eye* upon him.'

One night, after a ball at the Cursaal, we had a very full meeting at the club, as was usual on gala evenings, no one feeling inclined to go home, to lie away in bed with the lively tones of the dance-music still throbbing in his ear, and the bright lights (eyes included) yet glittering in his brain.

We were standing round the lansquenet table, lighting cigars, settling chairs, and otherwise preparing for the game, when Foxey turned to the chevalier, who was rolling up a cigarette, and said:

'Monsieur Carvajal, I have a match to propose to you.'

'Anything monsieur pleases,' replied the Frenchman.

'What do you say to five games at écarté for five hundred francs?'

There was one broad grin on everybody's face; and mutterings relative to the rapidity with which the separation of the unwise and their money may be effected were heard from certain members.

'Anything to pass the time,' replied the chevalier, lighting his cigarette.

'And let it be agreed that it shall be fair for either of us to—to take any little advantage he can in the way of shuffling the cards—*peculiarly,* or—or to do anything of that sort.'

The captain in the Guards coughed; the rich Russian took snuff; the Dutch officer pulled out his moustache, which was of an elastic nature, to a surprising length. The chevalier merely elevated his eyebrows, and with a charming smile replied:

'Monsieur wishes to trick; but as I cannot trick, will it be just?'

'O yes; I had not finished my proposition. It shall be fair to cheat if we can without being seen: but if either party can detect the other, he shall win the game.'

'Anything to give monsieur pleasure.' And the pair retreated into the whist-room, whither many of us followed them, curious to see this eccentric match played out.

It was an amusing thing to see Foxey, while his opponent was shuffling the cards, leaning over the table, his twinkling green eyes eagerly fixed on the chevalier's hands, and his mouth wide open, as if he had a reserve eye somewhere in his throat, and was employing that too on the detective service. Every now and then, he would cry: 'Ah!' or, 'What's that?' or, 'Shake your sleeve, please;' and Monsieur Carvajal smiling all the while like a seraph, and replying: 'Pardon me;' 'You see?' 'All right!' would afford him every possible aid in his scrutiny.

The first game was won by Foxey, the next two by the chevalier, Foxey holding the best cards all the time, and yet losing with remarkable rapidity; and so on to the end of the match; the Frenchman getting three games out of five, with inferior cards throughout.

'I cannot understand it,' said Foxey, who controlled his vexation in a very creditable manner. 'Come, now it is over, tell us how you did it, Monsieur Carvajal.'

'My faith!' said the chevalier, 'it was very simple. I did not trick at all with the pack we were playing with; but Monsieur Foxey was so intent upon watching my hand, my sleeve, my lap, that he did not notice how I every now and then *marked myself an extra point,* by a slight touch of the two cards with which I was counting my game.'

Foxey left next day without bidding me adieu, and spent the rest of his holiday in slipping about the glaciers of Switzerland, which did him a great deal more good than the lounging gambling life we were leading at Baden would have done. But though it is now many years since we have both renounced the follies of our youth, I can always silence my friend when the old habit of bragging breaks out in him, by turning to his wife and saying: 'By the by, did you ever hear how Foxey played at écarté with the Chevalier?'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Now that the holidays are over, and savans and sociologists have come back from beyond the Grampians and elsewhere, there are brisk signs of work discernible, and a fair instalment of work is already actually accomplished. The lecturing branch of the diffusion of knowledge seems likely to flourish more vigorously than ever, if we may judge from the programmes put forth by the School of Mines, by scientific institutions, and popular demonstrators. There is no lack of interesting matter to talk about, especially in geology, chemistry, and agriculture. A recent visitor to Spitzbergen shews reason for believing that that island is in course of elevation at a rate far exceeding the upheavals in Sweden; a large and remarkable landslip has just occurred in the Isle of Sheppey; chemists are about to demonstrate the most economical way, so to speak, of manufacturing beef and mutton; and a process by which a crop of Italian ryegrass can be mown every four weeks from spring to autumn, has been made public by a competent authority.

The North-Eastern Railway Company have presented a paper to the Royal Agricultural Society which deserves notice for the experimental results and economical advantages therein exhibited. It gives details on the best methods of preserving, and rendering timber non-inflammable, and shews to what profitable uses old and decayed sleepers may be put. It is clearly demonstrated that the refuse sleepers, if properly treated in gas-retorts, will yield a liberal supply of gas free from sulphur, besides a considerable quantity of tar, pyroligneous acid, and 'dead oil.' These last three ingredients, properly mixed together, constitute an excellent coating for the preservation of posts, rails, and fences, and for sheds and other buildings now imperfectly protected by paint. The yield of acid alone is from four to five gallons per hundredweight of timber; and if the sleepers have been previously creosoted, nearly the whole of the products are recovered by the process of dry distillation which they undergo. Thus the old wood may be made the means of preserving new wood, and of illumination, besides yielding a sufficient remainder of marketable charcoal.

The Agricultural Society are earnestly working out the question as to the employment of steam-power in the cultivation of land, and further experiments and results are to be shewn at their meeting next year at Canterbury. Meanwhile, Mr Eddy argues that we may learn something as well for home tillage as for trade with the colonies, from the Americans. The Cape of Good Hope and Australia are good customers to Brother Jonathan for his agricultural implements; and Jonathan, by making the stilts of his ploughs removable, packs a plough in half the compass that we do ours, exports them at half the cost, and cuts us out of our own markets.

Professor Wheatstone, Mr Robert Stephenson, and Captain Galton, the commission appointed to investigate the subject of submarine telegraph cables, and determine on their best form and substance, are quietly pursuing their task, and this will be no light one, for whatever seems essential thereto is to be discussed and tested. Experiments will be made under tremendous pressure to represent the pressure at depths of from three to five miles under the ocean; and by the time the task is concluded, we may hope that the best form and thickness of conducting-wire, and a satisfactory comparison between india-rubber and gutta-percha as insulators will be established. Then our projected line from Falmouth to Gibraltar and Malta may be laid down with a reasonable prospect of permanence.

It is among the subjects talked of that an American has obtained the privilege from the Danish government of laying an under-sea cable from Greenland to Iceland, the Faröes, and so to the mainland of Europe; as the most feasible way of establishing a telegraphic communication between the two sides of the Atlantic. The lengths required by the route above named would nowhere be more than about 500 miles, which it is thought may be easily laid and maintained in working order.

Another project is mooted for extending the present Indian telegraph to Singapore; thence to Java, where a line of considerable extent has been constructed by the Dutch; thence to Timor; thence to Port Essington, in Northern Australia, and on to Moreton Bay. The distance from Java to the Bay is about 3000 miles. Were this carried out, and our Mediterranean line completed, London might then flash a message direct to Sydney!

One of the iron floating-batteries built during the Russian war has lately been towed from Sheerness to Shoebury Ness, to serve as a target for artillery. Fresh experiments are to be made with Armstrong's guns; and we hear that a firm at Wolverhampton are manufacturing shield-plates of steel for government; from all of which it would appear that the question between metal and wood for defensive purposes is not yet settled.

Mr Gore of Birmingham having made a ball revolve round a plate by electricity, as we noticed some time ago, has lately produced the same effect by the sole action of heat—converting heat, as it were, directly into motion. He makes a small circular railway—the rails wedge-formed, with the sharp edge uppermost; and on this, after it has been heated to a high temperature, he places a very light hollow ball of German silver about four inches diameter. The ball has scarcely touched the rails, before it begins to run either to the right or the left—mostly the latter—and makes seven or eight revolutions in a minute. It is only by extreme nicety that the experiment can be made with any hope of success; but when successful, it appears as a very remarkable instance of the phenomena of heat. The explanation of the motion is, that as soon as the ball touches the rails, being cold, it throws up two slight protuberances; two slight depressions take place in the rails, into which the ball is pushed by the protuberances, as by a lever; and as the same effect is immediately reproduced, the motion becomes continuous as long as the difference of temperature is maintained.

We find among noticeable geological facts, that large deposits of lead and copper have been discovered in Newfoundland; that a seam of coal has been met with in the chalk formations near Dover; and that some geologists find in water-glass or soluble silica, an explanation as to the origin of certain silicious incrustations, and of flint in some conditions, which have long been a puzzle. According to Sir Roderick Murchison's statement made before the British Association, the Silurian rocks are no longer to be regarded as the oldest fossiliferous in Britain; for the limestone of the most north-westerly Highlands is now ascertained to be of an age yet more remote.—Sir Charles Lyell has visited France for the purpose of seeing with his own eyes the gravel-beds containing the flint implements concerning which there has been, and still is, a good deal of scientific discussion. Although certain antiquaries incline to consider the implements as natural, and not artificial, the majority of opinion is on the opposite side; and the summing-up favours the argument which assigns these relics to the period of mammoths and other animals now extinct. In Professor H. G. Bronn's prize-essay, accepted by the Academy of Sciences at Paris, there is a passage which we quote as meeting the case in its present form. Discussing the Laws of Evolution of the Organic World, he says: 'All the cases cited are of such a nature, that a person destitute of any preconceived opinion would adopt without hesitation the notion of the simultaneous existence of human bones and remains of fossil animals in the same strata. Nevertheless, any one who chooses to submit them to the most severe criticism may still leave the door open for certain doubts.'—As regards practical geology, there is a mining department incorporated with the Bristol Diocesan School, and with a school at Wigan; and a mining college is about to be established in Durham.

Mr Bridge by contriving a series of apertures in cardboard, and taking a photograph thereof, reduced to a small scale, is enabled to elucidate certain phenomena of the diffraction of light. The result is singularly interesting, for it is exhibited in combinations of rings and colours, which, looked at with a telescope, present, as Mr Bridge describes, 'an appearance in many cases suggestive of designs which, both by the symmetry of their forms and the beautiful arrangement of colours, would perhaps surpass any produced by unaided ingenuity.'—Photography is still in use for the daily record of magnetic changes at Greenwich Observatory, and at Kew, for taking impressions of the spots on the sun. The observers at Paris state the nature of the spots of late to have been such that they have been able to note the movements of the photosphere within, better than on any former occasion. Father Secchi, at Rome, shews reason for believing the spots to be gaps in the photosphere, and not clouds, as commonly supposed; and he explains that by watching the gap or cavity as it first comes in sight, a shadow may be seen which demonstrates its hollowness. 'If this is so,' he continues, 'it will then be in our power to ascertain the depth of these cavities, and thus to measure the thickness of the sun's photosphere. A truly marvellous thing that the human eye, which in its natural state cannot direct itself on that luminary, should be able at length to provide itself with instruments adapted to measure the depth of that ocean of flame that surrounds it.'—Sir John Herschel says that the earth by its nearness to the sun in January, as compared with July, receives the sun's heat with an intensity one-fifteenth greater than in the latter month; in which fact we have one of the causes of the frightful summer heat in Australia.—Meteorologists have been put on the alert by the unusual frequency of auroral phenomena, and their apparent influence on the weather. It is one of the traditions of the weather-wise that such an influence prevails, and they point to the fact that the fine summer weather was broken up by the aurora of August 29—a splendid spectacle, as many will remember. It was seen as far south as Rome, where Father Secchi observed extraordinary disturbances of the magnetic instruments during the appearance. It was seen also in the United States, and there a change of weather was noticed similar to that which took place here.

Sir Henry Rawlinson and the Royal Asiatic Society, co-operating in a good work, have published seventy printed sheets of *fac-similes* of Assyrian inscriptions in the British Museum, of which students and scholars interested in the subject will no doubt avail themselves. Some of these inscriptions are from bricks dating as far back as 2000 B.C. Among the works mentioned in the Society's report as progressing, we notice Annals of Sennacherib; of Tiglath Pileser; some historical tablets of Sardanapalus; short legends of the Pul of Scripture; the cylinder of Esar Haddon; and Nebuchadnezzar's inscriptions, all of which are to be printed. Such a list betokens no unworthy activity among the members of the Society, learned in the living and dead languages of the east. Sir H. Rawlinson has prepared a transliteration of some of these inscriptions into Roman characters, and an interlinear translation of the sense into English, and will publish them at his own cost; and although some delay is incurred by his departure as ambassador to Persia, he gives us reason to hope that it will not be for long, and that meanwhile he shall be able to enrich our literature with yet more of eastern archæology. Bearing in mind what has already been accomplished by these investigations, and the discovery of the real significance of the Hebrew vowel-points by Dr Wall of the Royal Irish Academy, we look forward with lively expectations to the new researches which the publication of the above-mentioned documents will assuredly initiate.—Besides all this, the Society have received a series of copper-plates bearing Himyaric inscriptions, which were obtained in Southern Arabia, and forwarded from Aden by Brigadier Coghlan. A transcript and translation of the series is to be published; their date is believed to be of a time anterior to Mohammed.

News has come from the north and the south in which all who can read will take interest. Dr Livingstone, writing last June to Sir George Grey at the Cape, reports himself so far successful in his enterprise. He had travelled up a river—the Shire—to a lake hitherto undiscovered, named Shirwa, which is perhaps sixty miles long, and half as much broad; and is said to lie not more than five or six miles from N'yinyesi, the lake visited by Captain Speke. The doctor finds the natives industrious and well disposed, and a vast region where cotton and sugar may be grown in amazing quantities. One result of these explorations is to settle the question as to the Mountains of the Moon, of which vague rumours have been current from the earliest times. There are no such mountains; the interior of Africa is a plateau dotted with lakes, and furrowed by rivers; and the mountains are as unreal as the range which Sir John Ross once saw stretching across Lancaster Sound. The doctor intends to revisit Shirwa, and will doubtless journey on to the neighbouring lake; which, by the way, is written Nyanza in Captain Speke's report, and is considered by him to be the source of the White Nile.

The news from the North solves the great arctic mystery at last, and leaves no room to doubt the fitness of erecting the monument to Sir John Franklin and his companions at Greenwich Hospital. There is a melancholy satisfaction in knowing that the gallant chief died ere the blight had fallen on the expedition; that for him there was a timely removal from the evil to come. The story of the adventures of the ill-fated crews, so far as it can be gathered, will have been read with eager interest. It seems probable that not one survived the third winter. Lady Franklin was fortunate in her choice of an explorer, and Captain M'Clintock has well justified her selection. Besides the relics of the long-lost mariners, he has brought home complete series of magnetic and meteorological observations; of the polariscope, of the temperature of the land and water at different depths; he crossed the magnetic pole, finding the dip vertical, during one of his journeys, and has added eight hundred miles to our knowledge of the coast-line in that inhospitable part of the world.

ON SHAKSPEARE'S CLIFF.

If here the mortal foot was ever set
Of him the eldest born of human kind,
Inheritor of all their wealth of wit,
And love, and wisdom—where his Gloster, blind,
Old, unjust, sick of life's sad round,
Came purposeful to end it, beggar-led,
And that gray King did meet him, flower-crowned
(But not one poppy)—now can ne'er be said:
But while this massy precipice abides,
Shakspeare, to thee a monument sublime
Defiant stands of the remorseless tides,
As thy great Self, of ever-envious Time:
Ay, though the depths o'erwhelm it, shall not here
The everlasting billows thunder *Lear*?

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MISS CAMOMILE'S PHILOSOPHY OF CARRIAGES.

Though I have not mixed very much with the world, I flatter myself I know a good deal about it. I have got eyes; I have got ears; and I have had the advantage of living half my life in a moderate-sized, second-rate square, near the exact centre of the metropolis. My neighbours are professional people of all classes, who use their neighbourhood until they gather strength for a leap into one more fashionable, and who sometimes miss their footing, and sink back into suburban obscurity. I am a maiden lady, living on my property—a government annuity—and I stand like a monument, or something of that kind, unmoved by the changes around me. I could write a very instructive essay upon the philosophy of squares, but that is not my present object. My mind is full of the subject of carriages—broughams, chariots, and such things—and I have been advised to put my thoughts upon paper. Miss Biggleswade, a particular friend of mine, and a very sensible person, who takes tea with me twice a week—Wednesday and Saturday—has often urged me to record the results of my observation.

'Miss Camomile,' she has said, 'I am sure you are neglecting to use the talent with which it has pleased Providence to provide you. I have read all the books that now come out, which are never tired of abusing the hollow mockeries of the universe, and I assure you that I have met with nothing in their pages so edifying as your conversation over your own tea-table.'

These are Miss Biggleswade's exact words, and they have determined me to write a few lines on the philosophy of carriages.

I will not involve myself in any quarrels by mentioning names; I will not commit myself by making any direct assertions; but it has always seemed to me a very extraordinary and inexplicable thing that Dr A.'s professional skill should have increased so wonderfully from the moment that he started a carriage. Before that event took place, his reputation was not worth a jar of tamarinds, and no one in their senses would have called him in to doctor a kitten or a sick lapdog. His diploma was obtained from a place they call Idlebeggar, or some such name, in Germany, where degrees, I am told, are sold in the open streets, at a price varying from five shillings to fifteen and sixpence. He cut off the right leg of poor Mrs B.'s baby, when there was no more the matter with it than with the lamp-post round the corner. The unfortunate child has been a cripple ever since, with a wooden stump, which is always making holes in the flower-beds of the enclosure. He knew no more of the commonest drugs than my milkman—perhaps not half so much, in these days of general adulteration—and if it had not been for his assistant, a young man whom he kept in a back-kitchen upon forty pounds a year and his victuals, I am convinced the whole neighbourhood would have been decimated by poison. People talk of the prudence and economy of putting down a carriage because they are totally ignorant of the subject upon which they are discoursing. If Dr A. had not procured the green brougham with the two gray horses—upon credit, I believe—at the exact moment that he did, he might have found himself, in another twelvemonth, behind an apothecary's counter. He had enough sense and knowledge of the world to save himself from that; and poor Mrs B.'s crippled baby, with all his many other failures, were at once forgotten by his patients. People of that very large class who have more money than wisdom immediately discovered him to be a highly meritorious practitioner. People who did not keep carriages themselves were particular in engaging him, because they liked to see his handsome vehicle parading before their houses. He attended consultations he was never invited to before, and secured many acquaintances as patients by taking them home from evening-parties in his carriage. Though his brougham was not decorated with placards announcing his trade and his residence, it was quite as much an advertising medium as any van from a furnishing ironmonger's.

There is Mr C., the great portrait-painter, who got me to give him six sittings, and then could make nothing of me; it is quite marvellous what a command of form and colour he has acquired since he has had the command of a carriage. Though I cannot see any connection between the two things myself, there are plenty of people who can, and I suppose I must therefore consider myself a remarkably stupid person. I have heard his pictures called caricatures, tea-boards, sign-boards, Babylonian frescoes, and many other contemptuous names; but that was some little time before he had improved himself with a carriage. Now, his critics are content to hang up in their halls and dining-rooms the vilest daub he thinks proper to produce, for his terms have advanced with his fashionable style of living, and there is no vulgar suspicion so strong and lasting as a belief in a high-priced article, especially in pictures. His bar-maids have become blooming matrons; his old hags are turned into aristocratic dowagers; his angular imps of children are changed to Sir Joshua's cherubs; and his butchers' boys are the flower of English chivalry. This comes of stopping the way with a carriage.

There is Mr D., the celebrated musician; he could neither sing, compose, nor play until he indulged in the luxury of a carriage. From that moment, his voice became a tenor of remarkable purity and range; his touch upon the piano was considered equal to the best masters; and the music-publishers suddenly found out they had long neglected a man of decided genius. He composed an opera which a theatrical manager was found to produce solely because it had got the carriage-stamp of excellence. Of course, the public were not to be deceived, for Mr D., although he made the most of waving a white stick in the orchestra—conducting, I believe, they call it—could not bring his chariot into the theatre, and the piece was strongly condemned on the first night of representation. The audience, who had loudly expressed their contempt of the production, were astonished to read the next morning in their papers, that the work was the most brilliant success of the most brilliant composer of his time. The carriage had been driving about pretty briskly during the night.

Miss E., who has suddenly obtained a reputation as one of the most rising young authoresses of the day, has ridden gently into notoriety on the borrowed cushions of Lady F.'s brougham. If you cannot purchase or hire a carriage, the next best thing is to borrow one. Miss E. had more wit and judgment than I gave her credit for, when she fastened herself so securely to the skirts of her ladyship. The basketful of well-thumbed manuscripts—fashionable novels made up of paste, scissors, and the experience of a back drawing-room—were at once taken out and dusted, and put with the writer in a corner of my lady's carriage. Fashionable publishers who, before this, were always choked up with matter, were now delighted to be favoured with the offer of so highly meritorious a work, especially as it was to be dedicated, by permission, to her ladyship. Miss E. must be a clever person, after all, to manage so well as she does with such very slender advantages. We must not be too hard upon the errors in her works, for people cannot be expected to scratch out and alter with a pair of scissors.

There is Mr G., who now calls himself an architect, because he could never succeed as a builder; he knows as well as any man the advantages of owning a handsome chariot. The only local building he ever had a contract for was our parochial schoolhouse; and one day, just as the boys had providentially gone to dinner, this precious structure fell down, and buried an usher and a man who was repairing the flooring. There was an inquest, of course, a very formal affair, and Mr G. prepared for it by engaging an eminent counsel, and starting a distinguished carriage. The counsel did his work well, and so did the vehicle. Mr G. got off without so much as a censure, for his equipage was always driving up and down before the court; and it was clearly shewn that the carpenter who had perished in the ruins had brought it entirely on himself by using spikes instead of nails, and driving them down with a clumsy sledge-hammer. Mr G. had the decency, however, to retire from the building business after this, and to turn himself into an architect. He now draws very pretty pictures upon paper, which other people alter, and build from or not, as they think proper; while he secures a very high payment for his designs, because he rides in his carriage.

I am not surprised at the gregarious habits of carriage-made people. I am not surprised that Mr H., the well-known solicitor, whose reputation is based upon his brougham, should give his briefs to Mr K., the popular barrister, whose reputation is also based upon his brougham. I am not surprised that both these gentlemen should be standing counsel and attorney to Mr L., the banker, whose wealth, or reputed wealth, has, to a great extent, no better foundation than his carriage. Nor am I surprised that the two legal gentlemen should bank at the establishment of Mr L. There is a principle of mutual advantage at work in these cases, which explains the interchange of patronage; but I am astonished that the general public, who have no interest to consult, except to get the very best article, advice, or assistance for their money, should bow down before an empty go-cart, that costs, perhaps, a hundred and fifty pounds a year; while they talk very loudly of the car of Juggernauth, and pity the wretched superstition of the Hindoos.

CUBAN LITERATURE.

Doubtless the majority of my readers will be surprised to hear that Cuba has any literature at all. When we consider how completely the island has been enveloped in the colonial system of a government which has always acted upon the resolution frankly proclaimed by Charles IV. when he suppressed the university of Maracaybo, 'that information should not become general in America;' and how exclusively the energies of the creole mind have been directed to what is called practical life—that is, to eating, drinking, sleeping, and trafficking—it certainly is astonishing that Cuba should have produced any writers capable of interesting mankind seriously, by the vigour, dignity, or beauty of their works. Yet such is the case. I know how apt we are to overestimate anything which has any flavour of 'caviar.' Superiorities of this sort are sad snares. 'Those oysters we had at Venice' have spoiled the appetite of many an untravelled friend, who was beginning to be ignorantly jubilant over the choicest products of Princes Bay, and the oldest thoughts clothed in a foreign tongue affect us like a familiar landscape seen through stained windows. But after all deductions made, and judging them in the most impartial spirit, some of the Cuban authors deserve, it seems to me, this high praise, that they have been thinkers and artists in a land indifferent to thought and to art, and true lovers of liberty in an atmosphere of oppression. Particularly must this praise be awarded to three men—Heredia, Milanes, and Placido. These all are poets, and the best productions of the Cuban mind must be sought in the field of poetry.

The poet is everywhere the morning-star of mind, in whose light tyrants see only another ornament of the night they love, while the oppressed hail the harbinger of day. No prose-writer could ever have secured the publication in Cuba of the thoughts and feelings which her poets have given to the world. The government, in every case, indeed, has awakened sooner or later to recognise the patriot in the minstrel, and there are few of the noteworthy bards of Cuba upon whom the hand of authority has not fallen more or less heavily. The works of most of these writers are now contraband at home, and cannot easily be procured. Formerly, there were several journals and magazines in the island, which used to be enriched with melodious sedition, but the censors of the press have succeeded in purifying even the 'poets' corner.' The *Resista de la Havana* is now as decorously dull as the *Giornale di Roma* itself.

A brief sketch of the character and temper of the poets whose names I have mentioned, will shew the reader how much there is to be repressed in the impulses of the higher class of Cuban minds. I select them, not merely because they seem to me the first in point of literary excellence, but because they sprung from three different classes of the city population.

José Maria Heredia was a gentleman by birth and position. The son of a patriot, whose patriotism made him an exile, Heredia, born in 1803, at Santiago de Cuba, was carried in his childhood to Mexico. There, at the age of sixteen, he lost his father; and returning to Havana, was admitted, in 1823, to practice as an advocate by the supreme court at Puerto Principe. His opinions and conduct soon attracted the suspicions of the government, and in November of the same year he was obliged to flee to America. He published the first collection of his poems at New York in 1825. In 1826 he was invited to Mexico, where he was appointed assistant-secretary of state; soon afterwards he became a judge in the supreme court, and was sent to the senate of the republic. He died at Mexico in the prime of life on the 6th of May 1839. An edition of his works was published at Toluca in Mexico in 1832, and another at Barcelona—the Marseille of Spain—in 1840. As a man, Heredia is honourably remembered for the generosity, integrity, and amiability of his character. As a poet, the dignity of his thought, the harmony of his versification, and the graces of his language, well support his claim to the high rank which his countrymen have assigned to him. As a patriot, his love of country seems to have been not less wise than fervent. The following lines from one of his unpublished poems, *The Exile's Hymn*, vibrate with the genuine thrill of poetic feeling, and with the manliest passion:

Fair land of Cuba! on thy shores are seen
Life's far extremes of noble and of mean;
The world of sense in matchless beauty dressed,
And nameless horrors hid within thy breast.
Ordained of Heaven the fairest flower of earth,
False to thy gifts, and reckless of thy birth!
The tyrant's clamour and the slave's sad cry,
With the sharp lash in insolent reply—
Such are the sounds that echo on thy plains,
While virtue faints, and vice unblushing reigns.
  Rise, and to power a daring heart oppose!
Confront with death these worse than deathlike woes.
Unfailing valour chains the flying fate;
Who dares to die shall win the conqueror's state!
We, too, can leave a glory and a name
Our children's children shall not blush to claim;
To the far future let us turn our eyes,
And up to God's still unpolluted skies!
Better to bare the breast and undismayed
Meet the sharp vengeance of the hostile blade,
Than on the couch of helpless grief to lie,
And in one death a thousand deaths to die.
Fear'st thou to bleed? O better, in the strife,
From patriot wounds to pour the gushing life,
Than let it creep inglorious through the veins
Benumbed by sin, and agony, and chains!
What hast thou, Cuban? Life itself resign—
Thy very grave is insecurely thine!
Thy blood, thy treasure, poured like tropic rain
From tyrant hands to feed the soil of Spain.
If it be truth, that nations still must bear
The crushing yoke, the wasting fetters wear—
If to the people this be Heaven's decree
To clasp their shame, nor struggle to be free,
From truth so base my heart indignant turns,
With freedom's frenzy all my spirit burns,
That rage which ruled the Roman's soul of fire,
And filled thy heart, Columbia's patriot sire!
Cuba! thou still shalt rise, as pure, as bright
As thy free air—as full of living light;
Free as the waves that foam around thy strands,
Kissing thy shores, and curling o'er thy sands!

Heredia's fine poem of *Niagara* must be known to many of our readers through Mr Bryant's excellent version. It has always seemed to me one of the very best utterances ever called forth by a scene whose praise 'expressive silence' best can sing. Even upon the brink of the mighty cataract, the palm-trees of Cuba sigh through the wanderer's thought, whispering sadly of the grievances and misery that flourish in their shade.

The *Season of the Mothers* inspires some natural and musical verses, in which the dreams of the patriot still mingle with the blest reality of the husband's happy love.

My happy land! thou favoured land of God,
Where rest His mildest looks, His kindliest smiles,
Oh, not for ever from thy soil beloved
May cruel fortune tear me! but be thine
The latest light that on these eyes shall shine!

How sweet, dear love, to listen to the rain,
That patters softly on our humble home;
To hear the wild winds whistling o'er the plain,
And the deep booming of the ocean's roar,
Where shattering surges lash the distant shore!

There, by thy side, on softest couch reclined,
My throbbing lyre shall rest upon thy knees,
And my glad heart shall sing the boundless peace
Of thy fair soul, the light of thy dear face,
My happy lot, and God's surpassing grace.

Clearly, Heredia was a man to be seriously 'discouraged' by any despotic government.

Milanes, born in a more humble rank of life, and bound by his occupation to the mercantile class, was not less warm and sincere in his patriotism than Heredia. But the temper of his mind was melancholy, and his sweet strains are full of a sad, mystical fervour. His brother says of him, in the preface to an edition of his works published at Havana, that he 'was inspired with the noble enthusiasm of accomplishing a great social mission, and, possessed of faith and hope, selected for the subject of his songs moral or philosophical ideas.' He is indeed a very plaintive poet; and in reading his verses we are haunted with a continual indefinite sound of wailing. Certainly there is not much in the condition of Cuba which can inspire her bards with pride and pleasure. But the intense melancholy of Milanes has a tone of personal suffering like that which pervades the sonnets of Camoens, or the complaints of Tasso. The gloomy tendencies of the temperament of Milanes, aggravated by private troubles, and still more, no doubt, by the consciousness of his impotence to redress those wrongs of his country which he so keenly felt, finally overpowered his reason. The story of this young man, the purity of whose character, the elevation of whose aims, and the delicacy of whose genius have secured for him a real and beneficial influence in his own country, sad as it is, is by no means the saddest to be found in the brief literary history of Cuba.

Gabriel de la Conception Valdes (not unknown by his *nom de plume* of Placido) was a mulatto of Matanzas, a comb-maker by trade, whose education was of the very rudest kind, a pariah of society, bearing in his very form and colour the ineffaceable badge of disgrace and servitude. Yet this man triumphed over all the obstacles in his way, and, after establishing a high reputation as a poet, set the seal to his fame by a dignified and heroic death. In 1844, particulars of an intended insurrection of the coloured population came from various sources to the ears of the supreme authority of Cuba, and seemed to demand investigation. Everything like a representative body having been abolished by Tacon, there was no apparent way open for consulting with the creoles on the subject. The captain-general coolly resolved to settle the business by military commissions, and immediately let loose upon the island a horde of inferior officials, who proceeded to collect testimony, and to inflict punishment after the fashion of the 'process of the Templars,' or 'Jeffrey's campaign.' Numbers of free persons of colour and of slaves died under the lash,[*] many others were summarily shot, and such infamous excesses were committed by the *fiscals* as beggar belief. The victims of this dreadful persecution were stripped of their property, and the crown-officers—with a few honourable exceptions—soon converted their system of terror into a grand financial expedient. White creoles and foreigners were not exempted from the pestilence of power, and the planters were compelled to ransom their slaves at great cost, from a tribunal which arrested without accusation, and condemned without inquiry.

The conspicuous position of Placido among his people marked him out as an early victim. It is not improbable that Placido may have been concerned in the conspiracy which there is really reason to suppose was then organising, and though he contemptuously denied many of the charges brought against him, he does not appear to have shrunk from maintaining the right of the negroes to rise against oppression. He was found guilty, and sentenced to be shot. He behaved in prison with great propriety and composure, and won the admiration of numbers who visited him.

In the intervals of his preparation for death, he composed some of the finest of his poems, particularly his *Prayer to God.* Can we deny the honours of genius to the Cuban *mulatto* who could so feel and speak?

O God of love unbounded! Lord supreme!
In overwhelming grief, to thee I fly;
Rending this veil of hateful calumny,
O let thine arm of might my fame redeem!
Wipe thou this foul disgrace from off my brow
With which the world hath sought to stamp it now.

Thou King of kings, my fathers' God and mine,
Thou only art my sure and strong defence;
The polar snows, and tropic fires intense,
The shaded sea, the air, the light are thine;
The life of leaves, the waters' changeful tide,
All things are thine, and by thy will abide.

Thou art all power; all life from thee goes forth,
And fails to flow obedient to thy breath;
Without thee, all is nought; in endless death
All nature sinks, forlorn and nothing worth.
Yet even the void obeys thee, and from nought,
By thy dread word, the living man was wrought.

Merciful God! how should I thee deceive?
Let thy eternal wisdom search my soul!
Bowed down to earth by falsehood's base control,
Her stainless wings not now the air may cleave.
Send forth thine hosts of truth, and set her free!
Stay thou, O Lord, the oppressors' victory.

Forbid it, Lord, by that most free outpouring
Of thine own precious blood for every brother
Of our lost race, and by thy Holy Mother,
So full of grief, so loving, so adoring,
Who, clothed in sorrow, followed thee afar,
Weeping thy death like a declining star.

But if this lot thy love ordains to me—
To yield to foes most cruel and unjust,
To die, and leave my poor and senseless dust
The scoff and sport of their weak enmity—
Speak thou! and then thy purposes fulfil;
Lord of my life, work thou thy perfect will!

A letter which Placido sent to his wife on the night before his death, is worthy of a place beside the more famous one which Padilla wrote in circumstances so similar. Thus the despised labourer bade eternal farewell to his mother.

The appointed lot has come upon me, mother,
The mournful ending of my years of strife;
This changing world I leave, and to another,
In blood and terror, goes my spirit's life.
But thou, grief-smitten, cease thy mortal weeping,
And let thy soul her wonted peace regain;
I fall for right, and thoughts of thee are sweeping
Across my lyre, to wake its dying strain—
A strain of joy and gladness, free, unfailing,
All-glorious and holy, pure, divine,
And innocent, unconscious as the wailing
I uttered at my birth; and I resign,
Even now my life; even now, descending slowly,
Faith's mantle folds me to my slumbers holy.
Mother, farewell! God keep thee, and for ever!

On the morning of the 28th of June, Placido was led, with nineteen others, to the Plaza of Matanzas. He passed to his death like an Indian chief, chanting for a death-song his own noble *Prayer.* He was to suffer first, stepped into the square, knelt with unbandaged eyes, and gave the signal to the soldiers. When the smoke rolled away, it was seen that he had only been wounded, and had fallen in agony to the ground. A murmur of pity and horror ran through the crowd; but Placido slowly rising to his knees, drew up his form proudly, and cried, in a broken voice: 'Farewell, world! ever pitiless to me! *Fire here!*' raising his hand to his temples.

Possibly this dark history may not yet have rounded to its close. Men like Toussaint and Placido fall not obscurely nor unavenged. Their friends are

Exultations, agonies,
And love; and man's unconquerable mind.

A Spanish traveller in Cuba, Sálas of Queroga, says of Placido's poetic merits: 'I know no American poet, Heredia included, who approaches him in genius, in polish, and in dignity.' The same critic, after analysing Placido's poetry, writes thus:

'It is truly wonderful to hear a poet, esteemed humble by the society in which he lives, addressing himself to the queen-regent of Spain in language like this:

Some one there is, who, with his golden lyre,
Worthier thy sovereign ear, shall chant
To the vibrations of its jewelled strings
More grateful songs, perchance, but not more free!

And these lines are equally bold and daring:

And beats not thy heart too? Therefore will I,
While the pure dawn her snowy canopy
Hangs on the orient sky,
Bid my rejoicing hymns to God on high,
Upborne by gentlest breezes, swiftly fly:
Let them who fear be dumb, for not of them am I!
If thou with pleasure hearest, let thy prayers
Swift seek the Eternal, that my songs may rise
Even to His throne, and then on Cuba fall,
Impearled in blessings from the echoing skies!

It was important for me to paint the poetic character of Placido, to bring into clearer relief his astonishing merits. I fear, nevertheless, that my readers will not sufficiently appreciate the true condition of a miserable labourer in the island of Cuba; and only by such an appreciation can they fully estimate the great value of the lines I have quoted. The vigour of Placido's versification corresponds to that of his thought. It is surprising to see the facility with which he manages the tenderest themes, and some of his compositions touch the deepest emotions of the soul. My task would be endless should I attempt to extract all the beauties of these poems, for if there are very few that can be quoted in full, there is not one unrelieved by the light of genius. Their faults arise from the poet's want of instruction; their inspiration is celestial.

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[*] The British commissioner, Kennedy, says 3000!

This man, be it once more remembered, was a person whom many an American lady would have thought sufficiently honoured with a place behind her chair at the dinner-table, where he might have listened to edifying conversation about the insulted genius of Burns and the prejudices of a snobbish nobility!

I must not dwell here upon the names and works of Cuban poets of various merit, numerous enough to furnish ample matter for a grand division of the poets and poetry of Spanish America.

It is enough if I have clearly indicated the existence, in various ranks of Cuban civic society, of nobler thoughts and higher aims than the press or the prevailing character of social life reveals. The chief interest of the literature of Cuba is indeed derived from the proofs which it affords us that the seeds of liberal thoughts and pure desires, which the winds and waves have somehow wafted even to those blockaded shores, have germinated, and are bearing fruit. As works of art, the poems which have fallen under my notice cannot, in general, be highly commended. The literature of Spain, since the days of Cervantes and Calderon, has been fertile chiefly in bad models. The vast majority of the later Spanish poets oscillate between the trivial and the dreary. The Spanish Pegasus has been broken to a tyrannous *manège*. The influence of a system of versification not much less absurd than the rules of the master-singers is felt by the most careless reader, in the indescribable tediousness of Spanish poetry. The study of the French Romanticists—for France is the true teacher of the enlightened Cubans—has indeed somewhat relieved the Cuban poets from this thraldom. While Volney and De Tracy have taught the Cubans materialism in morals and philosophy, Victor Hugo and Lamartine have disclosed to them new secrets of poetical composition. But the prevailing temper of the tropics is hostile to the highest forms of poetry.

In that eternal summer, the voice grows languid as the mind. 'Out of their few warm days,' says Landor, 'the English, if the produce is not wine and oil, gather song and garner sensibility.' Out of their unchanging heats and splendours, the sons of the tropics gather tears and garner sentimentalism. The Cuban Muse rarely tries the flights of the 'Theban eagle,' as rarely the soaring rapture of the English lark: she sits in the heavy foliage of her delicious home, and there 'her sad song mourneth well,' or ill, as the case may be.

The names of the Cuban poets—those rich, sonorous Spanish names, which you cannot utter without an unconscious inflation of the voice, and an involuntary wave of the hand—tempt one to expatiate upon this subject; but I shall forbear. The titles of some of these works will convey a sufficient idea to the judicious reader of the school to which they should be referred. *Leaves of My Soul*, *Heart-beats*, *Whirlwinds of the Tropics*, *Passion Flowers*—such are the baptismal phrases in which Cubans delight. Gleams of manly aspiration are not wanting in these writings, nor the comfortable light of a true respect for what is trust in womanhood. Milanes is not alone in the faith that

Still in woman's heart the true Eden lingers,
Bearing fruit of Loving Feeling and Belief.

Vivid descriptions of natural scenery, much in the glowing Portuguese manner, illuminate these pages. Imaginative, these poets rarely are. With that quality none of them was so richly gifted as Placido. His images are often pathetic in their originality; as, for instance, when he compares the sudden passing of the moon from behind the cliffs into the open starlit sky, to the advent into the ball-room of a beautiful woman, superbly dressed, and wearing a Cashmere shawl. Quaintly barbaric as this image seems, yet how charged it is with the sad history of gorgeous dreams and warm visions, prisoned in the poet-brain of an outcast and a pariah!

The prose literature of Cuba may be quickly reviewed. 'How can we speak, who have no freedom to will,' cried Jacques de Molay to his judges; 'for with the loss of freedom to will, man loses everything—honour, courage, eloquence!' No plea of 'poetic licence' avails the Cuban whose words are not tagged with rhymes. The Havana book-stores contain nothing to indicate that the 'University of Havana' has borne any more fruit than El Azhar, the Oxford of the Arabs. The periodicals are trashy in the extreme. The newspaper press is, of course, entirely in the hands of Spaniards.

In the *feuilleton*, the ladies are generally furnished with a translation of some French novel. The leading articles are often able, but the body of the paper is filled with very much such matter as one finds in the columns of the 'newspapers' which young ladies at boarding-schools sometimes concoct.

The current news of the island is only picked up by hearsay in Havana, and chiefly on the crowded quay at the mouth of the harbour, where every morning 'the merchants most do congregate.'

The old Spaniards are very chary of their communications, and the creole hatred of the government acts like a mordant, biting in the blackest shades of every picture. While I was at Havana, the *garrotte* was several times erected at the Punta, and twice for the punishment of political offenders. The newspapers made no allusion to any of these events. In one instance, I happened to be dining on board a man-of-war, when an officer in the company gave us the history of one of the political prisoners—both of whom, by the way, were reprieved at the place of execution, and sent to the galleys at Ceuta—telling us that his name was Garcia, and that he was a miserable old creature, at whose house two of the Lopez party, badly wounded, had been left. He treated them very well, but they died. Shortly afterwards, the news of Las Pozas reached him, and our Cuban Falstaff instantly produced his dead pirates, alleging that he had slain them 'for queen and country.' He was rewarded with a decoration; but the truth coming to light after awhile, Señor Garcia was compromised, and finally brought into the shadow of death. One or two days after the reprieve, there appeared in the *Diario* what purported to be a sort of jubilate from the wife of one Garcia, who ought to have suffered something, but had been spared by the queen's mercy. No one who had not in some surreptitious way heard of Garcia and his story, could possibly have comprehended this singular communication.

Two mutinies of troops, at least, accompanied with fusillades, came to my knowledge—one at Villa Clara, and the other at Santiago de Cuba. They were only darkly glanced at in leaders laudatory of the 'firm justice of Spain,' and contemptuous of the scandal which something not stated might cause in 'a neighbouring nation.' The Cuban press is, indeed, no transcript of the Cuban, but only of the 'Peninsular' world.

A DULL FELLOW-PASSENGER.

It was a wintry night, in the month of December, in the year of grace 1828, in the little town of ——. Snow had been falling for some hours, until the narrow streets were thickly coated with white. The few passengers on foot hurrying to their homes became fewer still, stepping as noiselessly as ghosts, while their strange uncouth habiliments made them resemble the watchmen of a Christmas pantomime. Presently the shower of white flakes began to cease, and the sharp, cutting wind to take their place; here and there, a patch of dark clear sky was visible between the flying masses of sombre and heavily laden clouds. It was, after all, only in the early part of December, though the earth was already shrouded in the blanched cerement of the old year, which was dying away; but then, fifty years ago, winter was accustomed to set in much earlier than we see it in these times. It had been one of those cheating days when the sky is in fragments of black gray and brilliant blue; there is a brief sunshine, and then a bitter north wind arises, and a shower falls, every drop of which is icy sleet, until, with blinded eyes, aching faces, raw skins, and a general sensation of smarting all over, the most intrepid traveller is glad to shelter himself from the inclement elements. Towards the centre of the town, in the yard of the Crown Inn, an old hostler and a young helper were busied preparing the 'Highflyer' coach, which at that period ran between the south part of Cumberland up to the Scottish Border. It was a night-coach, and the route lay along the western coast, and partly by the sea-shore. The younger man addressed the other: 'Jowlie Jim is a fine coaxing hand wi' his cattle. I do suppose, now, he will be nigh the Border by break of day, Robin.'

'Nowt o' t' sort, man,' returned Robin, who, from his thick voice and reeking breath, had evidently tasted something stronger than water. 'Those sands be varra skeary places.'

'Ay, Robin; but wi' the sea on one side, and the cliffs to the right, he'd be a fule to drive into t' one, or atop o' t' other.'

'And what suld a sluthergullion like you ken aboot the matter?' retorted the old man irefully, in a dialect curiously compounded of English and Scotch provincialisms. 'When ye have the wind flyting i' your feace, and maist cutting aff your twa lugs, and ice blawing i' your eyes like a handful of auld wives' pins, and the snaw drifting here oop, and there doon, and the birds skirling over your head, and a young chap sitting by your side plaguing your life oot wi' his daft-like questions, and talking till ye are well-nigh blathered—hech, it's a gay maddling road, my lad; and if ever ye coom to try it, ye'll maybe find it sae. I wadn't drive the Highflyer this night for muckle mair than they'll win by the job,' he added emphatically.

'Ay, ay,' returned the other deprecatingly; 'but I've heard tell you once did, Robin, when Jim broke his leg by the Black Stanes.'

'That doesn't say I wad drive it to-night,' rejoined Robin gruffly. 'Noo, mon, I'll bide here; gang thy ways in, and leave t' coach to my hand, and maybe wi' a drap o' something het, I'll tell thee mair after.'

The young man complied, and the old hostler crossed to the stables, where four fine horses were standing ready bitted. The landlord and two men came out, and had apparently a hurried consultation, then Robin joined the trio. There, for the present, we will leave them, and look into the interior of the substantial square red brick-house which stands up the street, not sixty yards off. A tall, loose-limbed, fresh-coloured young man, wrapped in a mass of rough clothing, with his shepherd's plaid twisted round his shoulders, was offering his hand in token of leave-taking to a kindly looking ruddy-faced old gentleman, whose wife was administering caresses and consolation, wrappers, gingerbread, and peppermint cordial, to a pretty slender girl of about sixteen, whom she addressed as her niece Elspie. The young man cast every now and then shy glances athwart the old couple, and was evidently not discontented with the appearance of his future companion, though this sentiment perhaps rather contributed to increase an awkwardness natural enough, perhaps, to a huge-limbed, kind-hearted young farmer, whose years numbered little more than a score, and had been passed more on his native moors than in drawing-rooms; added to which, it was the first time he had had any young lady committed to his express care, and the knowledge that she was a minister's daughter added to his sense of responsibility. Elspie Grant had golden hair, dark-blue eyes, and regular features, and though pale and delicate-looking, possessed withal an air of character and self-control not usual in so young a girl. 'Good-bye, dearest uncle, and thanks for all thy kindness, which I shall never forget; and when I will be at my own dear home over the Border, I'll think of you often, and of your goodness to me; but, O auntie, my heart is just wearying to see my poor father, and the blue hills, and all the bairns!'

Her eyes were very bright, but she shed no tears, though the old lady began to wipe her own eyes, and make sounds indicative of distress.

'Weel, sir, I'll tak gude care of Miss Grant, and now we maun be on our way.' A few more kisses and many more cautions were given by the old lady; a little silk purse, with golden coins visible through the net-work, was thrust into her hands by her uncle; and then young Allen M'Laren and Elspie Grant left the house arm in arm, following the old man who was in waiting with the luggage in a handbarrow. Allen could feel that Elspie was sobbing, and the young fellow would have been glad to have said something kind to the delicate little maiden who was clinging to his arm, but as, rack his brain as he would, nothing came into his head to utter, he contented himself by stroking her hand with his broad huge palm, and expressing his sympathy in other respects by absolute silence.

'Is there any other traveller inside the coach?' he demanded of the landlady, a comely woman who presided in the sanded kitchen.

'There be no one else, sir; the young miss will be very comfortable,' she added kindly.

They waited a few minutes by the fire, and then the hostler ran in—'Time's oop.' Three or four outside passengers ran out to secure the box-seat, and young Allen lifted Elspie Grant up, and opening the door, assisted her into the coach. Thrusting the lantern partly inside, he discerned the figure of an apparently decrepit old man in the opposite corner.

'Who's inside, man?' he demanded of the hostler, who was hanging about, perhaps for the chance of a sixpence.

'It's just a puir invalid auld gentleman; he winna meddle o' the young leddy,' was the reply.

As Elspie got into the coach she stumbled over the legs of the person in question, which were stretched rather forward, and felt as stiff as cork, or rather wood, for legs of cork with joints of gutta-percha had not yet arrived at the perfection of the days of 1859. As he neither withdrew them, nor made any response to her half-audible apology, the young lady settled in her own mind that he was either fast asleep, or that he had a wooden leg, or that he was of a morose and disagreeable temper. Young Allen took out his short black cutty-pipe, and having charged it with coarse pigtail tobacco, ignited it by the aid of the dripping blue sulphurous fire of a match furnished him by the landlady; then having swathed his shoulders thoroughly in the plaid, he clambered on to his seat. Jowlie Jim, the coachman, took his own place, the men loosed their hold of the horses' heads, and the coach rattled out of the little town.

The night was very dark, and after an hour at a rapid pace they turned on to the open moor. Hardly anything was to be seen except a gallows, which was near to the road, and stood out in strong relief against the sheet of white snow. The chains still clanked in the wind, and either Allen saw, or fancied he saw, a few mouldy bones hanging to it. Poor little Elspie looked out only once, but that time she happened to see the gibbet, and not liking the spectacle, she drew up the window, nestled herself into the corner of the vehicle, and began to think of her own dear home. Four months ago, she had left it with the bloom of the heather on the moorlands, and the soft autumn wind blowing over the hills. The hoarse call of the grouse, and the plaintive wail of the plover, seemed to ring in her ears. How well she remembered the old stone manse standing half-way down the hill, sheltered by the thick black fir-plantations which shielded it both from heat in summer and cold in winter. Then visions came of a mild-eyed, cheerful woman, who would welcome home her child, and of her father too, who, she knew full well, would not be reading then, but would be pacing to and fro, and counting the hours and minutes to her arrival; and, in the midst of these pleasant reveries, Elspie fell asleep, and very soundly too.

The coach stopped at —— to change horses, and Allen opened the door to inquire whether his fellow-traveller would partake of any refreshment; but she was slumbering so quietly that he judged he should do most wisely in not disturbing her. As well as the glimmer of the lantern which he held in his hand served to shew, the gentleman opposite to Elspie seemed as immovable as ever, or else in sleep quite as deep; so Allen contented himself with stamping up and down to stretch his legs, and looking after his own creature-comforts, which included a pretty strong dram of whisky. They were soon all rolling on again, and the route lay for many miles along the shore. The weather had somewhat changed; the wind still blew fresh, but the air was much milder, and the night not nearly so dark. Snow-clouds were sweeping across the sky, over that darkening dreary sea; now and then, a white curl on the crest of the wave stood up like a wild swan in its career, and then rolled sullenly over its brothers to the quiet shore. It was 4 A.M. before Elspie awoke; the strange faint close odour which filled the coach made her feel quite sick, and she tried hurriedly to let down one of the windows. She experienced some little difficulty in accomplishing this, and her companion was not civil enough to offer to assist her. The smell of the salt water and the fresh breeze revived her, and she thrust her head out eagerly, the better to inhale it. To her eye, the sea was clay colour streaked with lead, such a corpse-like hue that one would almost imagine it was about to prove its own mortality. A lengthy broad shore was studded over in many parts with little gray rocks, patched with shrunken black sea-weed, though there was a broad route of firm level sand, quite available for carts or coaches at certain hours of the tide. To the right was a range of very low cliffs and round banks of sand, which in the daylight might be seen to be fringed with masses of pallid limp grass, out of which the cold wind and drenching sleet had effectually washed the life many weeks before. Just then, those dark-gray airy children of the night which had fluttered so long over the waste of waters began to disperse, and the moon shone down clear and radiant full on Elspie.

It was only when any obstacle caused a slight deviation of the route that the light was thrown on her fellow-traveller; but as well as she could make out, he was an old gentleman, who had the appearance of being a great invalid. He was wrapped in a long loose great-coat, which reached nearly to his feet; his left hand he held tightly across his chest, while his right hand lay across his knee, in the same position as though he held a pen between his fingers, and was writing; his head bent forward on his breast, and a broad-brimmed hat was so slouched over his face as completely to conceal his features. His whole posture was that of a person cramped or in pain; and presently Elspie began to notice with a certain curiosity that though his right hand never left his knee, at each movement of the coach the thumb and forefingers waved backwards and forwards, and the arm oscillated as though he were paralysed, and had no control over his muscles; and this peculiarity struck her more and more inasmuch as there was a certain rigidity and regularity in the movements. The poor little girl momentarily expected to hear groans of pain or cries for aid, but nothing of the kind occurred, and the silence grew oppressive. How she longed only to hear the sound of her neighbour's voice, just to break the spell, and make her think of anything but that lifeless-looking limb! Now, Elspie was by no means one of the scientific and strong-minded ones so often met with in the present day; she was merely a pretty, simple-hearted, sweet-tempered Scotch lassie, and therefore I feel she will not lose much ground in the good opinion of the reader if I confess that, though she was well able generally to manage for herself, she was a little bit of a coward at heart, and had a pretty little code of superstitions of her own. She grew rather frightened—the taciturnity and immobility of the man oppressing her—and her imagination found a new channel for speculation. Tales of disguised highwaymen were then frequently heard of; science had not then circulated universal scepticism on the subject of ghosts; but these ideas gave way to another and more terrific thought.

It was then about the time when the excitement respecting Burke and Hare was fresh in all minds, and the most dreadful tales were current of men who lay in wait behind walls, in ditches, or corners of dark roads, sprung on the defenceless and unwary, placed a plaster on their mouths, and smothered them in a few instants, swiftly and noiselessly, for the purpose of selling the bodies for dissection to the surgeons; nay, Elspie called to mind an attempt at murder, which had actually been made in a stage-coach, as she was told; for aught she knew, the very one which now bore her on her road. In truth, these horrible rumours were not without foundation; the absolute necessity of procuring subjects for anatomical purposes, and the prejudice which existed against the practice, especially among the poorer classes, had indeed not only made the disgusting trade of a resurrectionist, or body-snatcher, lucrative, but undoubtedly caused some horrible crimes. 'Why did this man so carefully conceal his face?' thought poor Elspie. 'What if he were only waiting to spring on her, and having executed his purpose, before she could utter a cry, how easily he could cast her poor little body out of the coach to a confederate!' She essayed to speak, but her tongue seemed to cleave to the roof of her mouth; and the continued automaton-like movement of the hand, and otherwise rigid impassibility which she discerned as she strained her eyes to catch a glimpse of his form, only added to her discomfort. It is impossible to describe the poor child's feelings of relief when they turned off the shore, leaving the sea to the left, and at the same instant she heard the bells of the town of —— chime five o'clock. As they entered the street, the coach gave a sharp turn, which had the effect of throwing the moonlight full on to the man in the opposite corner, and the reflection of the snow made it as clear as day; at the same time, the sudden lurch caused his hat to be jerked off his head, and it rolled on to her knee. He did not seek to replace it, so she hastened to return it to him; in doing so she glanced timidly up, and the long hidden face was at last fully revealed to her. She did not speak or scream, but what she then beheld made poor Elspie sit motionless with terror; her heart beat as though it would burst; her very breath seemed stopped, and her eye-balls were fixed and strained in their sockets. It lasted but for thirty seconds, though it appeared more than as many minutes. The coach rolled into the inn-yard, the door was opened, and Elspie sprung out, flew into the house, and uttering a terrible cry, fell fainting on the floor.

Allen was by her instantly, in the greatest perturbation of mind. A group formed round her, the women-servants and landlady administered restoratives. Suddenly Allen looked up and exclaimed: 'It 'll ayebe that fellow in the coach has been frightening her; fule that I was not to hae gotten inside!' and with that he snatched up a lantern and rushed back to the coach. It was, however, empty; the gentleman had gone, but his broad-brimmed hat lay at the bottom of the vehicle. Allen returned with it in his hand, and addressed himself furiously to the landlord, the coachman, and the guard. 'There has been something no canny here, gentlemen. That villain has been misbehaving some way, or why did he leave his auld braid hat behind him, and the poor young leddy frightened into fits?'

The landlord looked perplexed, the guard looked queer, the coachman uncomfortable.

'Oh, man,' continued Allen, pathetically, 'the young leddy was under my watchfulness, and I 'll gar you tell the truth if I take the law of you.'

At last the guard spoke. 'Deed, sir, I 'll swear it was no possible the auld gentleman could hae had speech wi' the leddy, or laid a hand, or even hae winked wi' an ee at onybody.'

'And what 's to prove that, mon?' returned Allen.

'Weel, sir, I 'll satisfy you, if you 'll just promise to be canny and no mak a stir.'

'If you can prove your words true, I 'll say nae mair about it,' replied the young man.

'Weel, sir, weel, the puir auld gentleman was just a body! He had died sudden, and having nae friends, the doctors had gotten him into their clutches, and were just sending him in a present. He was to have travelled in the boot, ye ken; but the misguided villain had putten him inside the coach, and I couldna move him after the young leddy had gotten in. But they had tied his hands quite natural-like; and wi' a bit black ribbon under his jaw, and his slouched hat, he really was no so varra bad to look at; and they had but just gotten aff wi' him when you went hooling back, man. So you see he couldna have been unceevil to your young leddy, being just a puir *body;* and that's all I ken about it, sir.'

SYDNEY AND ITS SUBURBS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

I HAVE frequently been asked, since my return from a six years' sojourn in New South Wales, 'And what is Sydney like?' I am about to reply to the query by giving a rough outline of the place, interspersed with a few sketches of its people.

A break in a great wall of cliff gives entrance to Port Jackson from the strangely named Pacific. A revolving light upon the height of the South Head used to be considered a sufficient indicator of the opening; but since, one fearful night, that peaceful ocean rose in wrath, and smashed the stout *Dunbar* like a mere band-box on the pointed crags of The Gap, a rocky *cul de sac* which, in the gloom, the captain had mistaken for the harbour's gate—furnishing the sharks with a horrid banquet of six score corpses, which floated like sea-weed on the blood-stained sea, leaving but one survivor to tell their dreadful doom—a stationary light has been fixed upon the Inner South Head to give a surer guidance. Passing its blaze, should you enter by night, and the gleam of the beacon-bark moored off a shoal known by the unpoetical name of the Sow and Pigs, you find yourself in a leaden waste of waters. Lanterns dot the gaffs of anchored craft, like solitary oranges left on leaf-stripped boughs; here and there, an unextinguished candle makes a cabin window blink like a watcher's drowsy eye; a triangle of stars, red, white, and green, gives token of a nearing the steamer; pure real stars are mirrored bluely bright in the dull shimmer round you; the Southern Cross gleams up like a sunk treasure of the deep; bluff headlands peer with a wicked aspect through the dusk; palls of inky foliage stretch on all sides to the shore; a wooded island or two deepen the darkness of the waves with their sombre shadows; and far away, the lamps of Sydney glimmer faintly, canopied by their own lurid radiance.

But when morning comes, you are dazzled with beauty; you find yourself in what can be fitliest described as a lake congress—almost countless little land-locked bays so interlacing as to make it hard to determine where may be the stream. The islands that over-night had the look of outcasts meditating suicide, now gaze upon their reflections in the purple sea like Roman beauties hanging over their *specula* of polished steel. True, the trees that cover both the isles and mainland seem strangely deep-hued to an English eye; but then the gorgeous sunlight that dints the gently heaving waves with a myriad dancing dimples, glints gaily back from the brown-green leaves until they shine like burnished bronze. Snug, nest-like villas, too, relieve the darkness of the shore, with cream-white walls and twisted chimneys, seemingly scarce more substantial than the smoke which curls above them; trellised verandas clad in clematis; and pœcil flower gardens, with turf like flashing emerald, over which the banana waves its graceful flag, and the *agave* keeps proud, many-sworded sentry. You think of Eden as you note those patches of brilliance, with their two-edged guardian blades.

Yonder blue arm, girdling the colonial convict-haunted Cockatoo Island, leads to Parramatta, the oldest offshoot of the original colony. (Why *will* English anorthographists persist in spelling the word with one 'r?') The water gets muddier as it nears its goal, but, as a compensation, it reflects the lustre of acres of oranges; which 'fair Hesperian fruit' has no need of 'dragon-watch, with unenchanted eye' upon the Parramatta River, being quite as common as apples in Herefordshire.

That poor ait—the only ugly island in Port Jackson—is denominated Pinchgut, a name that dates from the old convict-times, when it was used as a prison for those whose proud stomachs nothing but starving could subdue. It is an eyesore now, with its fort like the drab-hat of a drowning giant perched upon it; but Pinchgut has long been the *vile corpus* of experimentalising engineers, and may think itself quite buckish at present in comparison with what it was when it lay a heap of dislocated boulders, the residuum of a fortification known as (col.) 'Barney's Folly.' Pinchgut is not Sydney's sole protection. To the left lies gimcrack Fort Macquarie; and sundry other more reliable batteries have recently cut their teeth on various points of the harbour—infant Herculeses that own Governor Denison for a father. In Farm Cove, too, the bay between the fort and Lady Macquarie's Chair—a promontory so called from its having been the favourite resort of the spouse of that complimentary governor, who classed all the inhabitants of Sydney in two categories, those who had been, and those who ought to have been, transported—you may generally see on a white ground the red cross of St George. As New Caledonia, however, musters a fleet of tricolors able (and willing) to blow the present English-Australian squadron out of the water, novercal England must look out, or she may soon learn that she has lost her richest colony, because she was too stingy to establish a fitly furnished naval station in the south.

The Cove, right before you, is crammed with shipping. A fleet of the noblest clippers in the world, with cutwaters like razors, fringe Campbell's Wharf and the Semicircular Quay, and lie, tier on tier, outside. Amongst the rakish Yankees and Aberdeeners you see, too, the proud frigate-build of Green's and Dunbar's ships—far more pleasing to the eye, and often quite as swift. Almost every nautical nation has its representative there. When the national flags are flying on a Sunday, it is a pretty sight. The red ensign, of course, preponderates; next come the stars and stripes—gay, but rather too much like a pocket-handkerchief; the vertical tricolor of France, and the horizontal of the Netherlands; the three castles of Hamburg, set in a red ground; the three crescents of the Turk; Portugal's streaked imitation of our flag; Sardinia's quatrain of niggers; Russia's and Austria's split rooks; Prussia's uncrowned crow; Denmark's St George (generally flying over green-painted timbers); and Swedish and South American bunting then flauntingly flap in the rich sunshine. Also over a little weather-boarded sanctuary on shore, the pretty Bethel flag puts out its peaceful invitation. But it is of week-days that I must talk just now.

The air on the quay is fat with a scent of greasy wool. Round and round go the pressers at their toil, lightened with song, and sadly bespattered with blasphemy. The labourers roll the compressed bales up sloping gangways for the stevedores to fit into the holds. Men of property, despite their coarse clothing and profuse perspiration, are some of these. A schoolmaster of my acquaintance had to raise his terms for boarders from a hundred to a hundred and fifty pounds per annum, in order to prevent his 'Establishment for Young Gentlemen' from being contaminated by the plebeian, albeit pecunious, presence of a stevedore's son.

Handsome white-stone warehouses, and a good substantial custom-house, resembling gingerbread only in its colour, rise on the left side of the Cove; but, first watching a cockle-shell of a steam ferry-boat start for the north shore, we will land upon the right. The mate of our hypothetical vessel—we are inside the Cove now—gives a lusty 'cooey' for a wherry, and presently one shoots from the throng of its half-dozen competitors alongside. Amongst the smartest of their smart race are the Sydney watermen, having hitherto beaten the best-trained Englishmen, with every advantage on the strangers' side, sent out to pull against them. To mitigate the nauseous amount of colonial 'bounce' which these successive victories have generated, I wish that White, Chambers, or one of the Claspers, could be induced to take a southern trip.

Up runs a string of flags at the signal-station yonder, announcing that a vessel has just cleared the Heads. We drop into our humbler vehicle, and in a jiffy land at the Queen's Wharf. The 'underdone-piecrust'-tinted buildings around have an old look about them, that is very agreeable after the spick-and-span novelty of Melbourne. Part of this aspect is owing to the shingle-roofs, which very soon put on a time-touched cast; but many of these walls have scorched beneath the heat of sixty summers, and I cannot describe how grateful the consciousness that they are not of his own generation is to an antiquity-loving Englishman. The want of a past, in many parts of the colonies, creates an 'aching void' in the heart of one who has lived with tradition breathing about him like the scent of long-since mouldered leaves in the depths of some dim forest.

We stumble up a rough, slanting yard, and find ourselves in Lower George Street—Ratcliffe Highway in miniature. Dingy publics touting for custom by assuming the insignia of different nationalities, ship-chandlers' and slopsellers' shops, are the characteristic tenements of the locality. Bustling clerks, sailors all more or less drunk, and stalwart draymen in blouses of blue serge—the owners, as their independent bearing proves them, of the substantial carts and steeds they drive to and from the various wharfs—constitute the bulk of its passengers. On the right of the street, the ground, spitted with a few dirty hovels, slopes up to a quarter that is called the Rocks. If you were to go a little further down, and turn into that lane like a railway-cutting, bridge-spanned at a dizzy height, you would see the meaning of the name. So you would if you were to stroll through the place itself, and mark the outcropping stone. But if you go, don't go at night. Here the foulest dregs of Sydney's convict element fester; hither the bulk of emigrant blackguardism naturally gravitates. Three-fourths of the cases that are tried at the police-court originate either here or in a smaller Alsatia in another part of the town called Durand's Alley, swarming with Chinamen. These places are the Lane, the Wentworth Street, the Fireball Court, the Tiger Bay, of Sydney.

We pass on into George Street proper, Sydney's Cheapside. There is a Cheapside throng upon the pavements. These look pock-marked, every fourth flag or so being either missing or worn almost to nothing. This is on the left, where the shops have an English country-town-like look. The *trottoir* is sound for the most part on the right, and shadowed by handsome banks and tenements, with plate-glass windows that smack of London. The roadway is less crowded than in London, and, occasionally, you see a bullock-team in it. The 'buses are named after mail-boats, singers, and actors, instead of demigods and heroes—Catherine Hayeses, and G. V. Brookes, instead of Atlases, Wellingtons, or Havelocks. The cads, lads of thirteen, in cabbage-tree hats and shirt-sleeves, are prime specimens of precocious colonial youth; they hail, chaff, swear, drink, and smoke, as smartly, as fiercely, and as gravely as an English conductor of twice their years. A few stray Hansoms have been imported. The four-wheel cabs, or hackney-coaches rather, are far ahead of ours—ex-gentlemen's carriages, with armorial bearings still upon their panels, undisfigured by numbers, and drawn by pairs of horses.

Passing the old Barracks, with a single sentry staring stolidly at the bustle which billows by him, let us drop into the *café*. At the marble-slabbed bar, rather apathetically discussing the last mail's European news with a brother German (all politics, saving local ones, exciting but a Laodicean interest in the south), lounges the proprietor, whom we will call Mr Kuhn, since he is tall, civil, ever smiling, and has been a courier. Kuhn's good temper goes deeper than the surface. Lord Deuceace, son of the Duke of Crabs, by whom Kuhn was often engaged, drank himself to death in Sydney. For some time before his death, he lay in an obscure lodging, in extreme penury, deserted by all his fast comrades—

So vanish friendships only formed in wine.

His condition came to Kuhn's ears, however, and thenceforth the nicest dinner that the cook of the adjoining restaurant could furnish was daily sent by the grateful German to the son of his old patron. In the colonies, old ties are so often entirely broken, and selfishness, like other weeds, springs up so rampantly, that it is pleasant to be able to chronicle an incident like this.

Two rows of little marble-topped tables, decorated with pale, porous, clay-water 'monkeys,' of Etrurian design, and dropsical-looking brass spring-bells, stretch down the room and the raised alcove beyond it. Two lines of cozy sofas back them. The lamps are elegant. Statuettes and pictures speck and hide the walls. You can have any colonial paper you like to call for, most of the English magazines, the *Athenæum*, *All the Year Round*, and *Chambers*. It would be a pleasant place enough, if it were but a trifle cleaner; but a certain amount of filth seems a necessary adjunct to a spot where foreigners congregate. Not that foreigners are the only customers of the café; it is the resort of all the fast fraternity in Sydney who are too aristocratic to haunt 'public parlours,' but too plebeian to obtain admission to one of the three English clubs. Clerks and reporters, in particular, affect it; and, since it owns a billiard-room, sundry gentlemen of the Rawdon Crawley genus. That slim, pallid, ex-*militaire* who has just strolled out—brother of one of the most distinguished dignitaries of the English Church this generation has known—is said to make his £300 a year here with his cue, which he supplements with a similar sum made elsewhere at cards.

Besides, however, a recently arrived Cockney—educated, probably, at Stratforde-atte-Bowe—who persists in replying to the French waiter's 'Blark coffay, sare?' 'We, garsong, cafhay noyer'—and another would-be fine gentleman who has ordered *absinthe*, but doesn't know how to drink it, there are just now only foreigners present. A party of officers, from a French war-steamer that has just come in, wax garrulous as school-girls over their most moderate libations; they seem but sham-sailors both in drink and dress, to English view.

A little dandy of a Hungarian refugee—a baron he calls himself, and describes with tears in his eyes the immense estates that he has lost through allying himself with Kossuth—sulks in minikin majesty at his table, because the waiters, who think his credit doubtful, will not condescend to come to him until all the other customers are served. A few mechanics, French and German, breakfasting, complete the group.

Lifting up a red curtain that veils the doorway, we step into the *restaurant* next door. A smart, large-eyed little Frenchwoman, fifty probably, but made up in such a way as to take off from her tale of years at least a score, smiles a sweet welcome from her desk-counter at the top of the apartment. Beside her, in a brown blouse, lolls *Monsieur son mari*, a big, bald-headed, fat-faced Frenchman, whose lazy, good-tempered eyes blink like an owl's through his having been up till two attending to the wants of the frequenters of the *Maison Dorée*, a post-theatrical oyster establishment he owns in Pitt Street. Half a score of waiters—French, mulatto-French from the Mauritius, Eurasian, and Hindoo—are flitting about, decorating the dining-tables with silver, glass, and steel, and doubling napkins into curious devices. Every chair will be taken in an hour or two; much claret will be shed; and multitudinous will be the orders for the restaurant's special delicacy, the *omelette au r-r-rhom*. What time a tame rat will issue from its hole, and trot from table to table, pleading for contributions like a cat.

The pastry-cook's on the opposite side of the way will be simultaneously filled with more economic feeders—clerks in receipt of slender salaries, who make their prandial meals off sausage-rolls or buns, compensating the slightness of their mid-day repast by what Mr Thackeray has called that 'execrable enormity,' a meat-tea.

This building with the heavy portico is the post-office. Here the blind men, who, save when mail-extras call a host of urchins into requisition, almost monopolise the trade of outdoor newsvendors, congregate, with their monotonous cries of *See-ney Mor-r-n Her'ld! Bell's Life! Freeman's Journ'l!* and from here, with thrown-back heads, and ever-tapping sticks, they start upon their rounds, dragged by dogs with protruded tongues and eyes, half-strangling themselves in their eagerness to thread the throng. Blind men, moreover, are the only permitted beggars of Sydney. It is not many of them, however, who stoop to utter the familiar alms-evoking wail of 'Plee-ee-ese—to re*mem*ber—the por-or-ore—blyind!'

But see, there is a still more singular newsvendor—a wild-eyed man with an ever-working face. His hat is decorated with the placarded contents of his wares, and tiny, party-coloured paper-flags. He shouts and gesticulates violently as he goes, and is girt and followed by a cordon and a tail of grinning *gamins*. That is the Flying Pieman, a harmless madman of wonderful pedestrian powers. He periodically disappears from the city to perform some match against Time, for which he has backed himself, with no one to take his wager, travels hundreds of miles within the self-stipulated period, and then turns up again as fresh and as foolish as ever, to amuse the youngsters as he is doing now. He comes of a very good English family, it is said. A great many strange scions of the aristocracy may be found in New South Wales. There is an old porter in one of the government establishments in Sydney who is really the next heir to a dukedom. I know a poor slaving lawyer's clerk whose honourable and gallant brother is a frequent guest at Windsor Castle. I was once introduced to a gentleman whom I took to be a scampish cabman, but discovered to be the nearest relative of one of the royal equerries. These are only a few of the instances which I could give—if I chose to take the trouble of raking them up—of pariahs that have tumbled out of purple.

No aristocrat is yonder gentleman. Mark his broad shoulders and bull neck, his cunning and yet humorous eye, his peony-hued cheek and grog-blossomed nose, with a fuffy little moustache, like the end of a mangy dog's tail, beneath it. He wears a white neck-cloth and a glossy suit of clerical black broad-cloth, and is the richest rascal in Sydney. He could lend you half a million, if your security were good, and yet was imprisoned only a few months ago for cheating, in his capacity of gold-buyer, a poor digger by false weights. Everything is fish that comes to his net. Capitalist though he be, he'll condescend to bet a crown with a carpenter. It is an amusing sight to see him on the Homebush Race-course (the colonial Epsom), rattling the gold and silver that his plethoric pockets hold, giving or taking the odds with book-makers of every grade. The Melbourne police locked him up a short time ago for certain rather suspicious transactions at Blind Hookey; but he compromised matters with his prosecutors by means of a liberal cheque, and was released from custody. There is a breadth of blackguardism about the fellow that elevates him into the heroic region of scoundreldom. This is the notorious rascal of whom every book of antipodean travel tells; the man who robbed the Bristol mail, and was assigned, when transported, to his wife, who had preceded him to the Bay with the rich 'swag;' who rose to the eminence of captaincy of that famed fraudulent fraternity, 'The Forty Thieves;' and eventually had the cool impudence, having returned without leave to England, to drive before the Queen in Hyde Park with a team of eight white horses.

He is not the only one who has reason—so far as this world's wealth is concerned—to bless the day when he was 'lagged,' to be transported at having been transported. The old stock are dying off, but a few of the richest men who traverse George Street are still those who were once flogged at the cart's-tail up it. Sundry 'old hands' now sit upon the magisterial bench. A droll story is told of one of these who had to pass judgment on an ancient 'pal.' The prisoner began to blubber. 'What are yer cryin' for, feller?' inquired the magistrate. 'Oh, Sammy, Sammy,' was the response, 'I'm thinkin' on the time when we was rumped togither at Miller's Point, and I bore it a deal better than you did, Sammy!' It is quite a common thing for an unsuccessful free colonist to say, 'I wish I had been lagged!' The descendants of the old convicts are not at all ashamed of their origin; and, considering how our own 'blue blood' piques itself on having 'come in with the Conqueror,' why should they be? Inside—that is, in the first settled parts of the colony—the old prejudice against those who are not lags or the offspring of lags still prevails amongst the lower orders; they are looked upon as an inferior, pluckless race. The wealthier of the second generation have emancipated themselves from this illiberal view, but when they speak of their fathers, you hear no cry of *Peccaverunt*. 'The best thing my old dad ever did in his life,' a squatter, whose sheep and cattle are upon a thousand hills, is in the habit of saying, 'was prigging that last pocket-handkerchief.' Convict origin is no obstacle to social or political advancement. Convicts' daughters make admirable matches, in an English point of view; and one of the last solicitors-general of New South Wales—a most agreeable, gifted, gentleman-like young fellow—was a convict's son.

That lumbering edifice, towering with a perfect Babel-pile of balconies, is the Royal Hotel, once famous for B-flats and pretty bar-maids. Those shed-like buildings on the other side of the way constitute the market. Fowls, turkeys, geese, ducks, wild ducks, teal, pigeons, and quail, are there to be had at about Leadenhall prices; dangling wallabies—a small kind of kangaroo that makes a delicious soup—rows of little naked baby-like sucking-pigs; prime Wollongong butter—as it ought to be, since it costs 2s. a pound; New Zealand, Coventry Island, and Hunter River potatoes; cabbages, cauliflowers, and carrots, French beans, leeks, and onions from those most prolific and profitable of diggings, the suburban market-gardens, priced at figures which, from their highness, would make Covent Garden stare; pomegranates, melons, peaches, grapes, apricots, figs, plums, oranges, and lemons, which also make an Englishman open his eyes, but this time on account of the lowness of the prices; three fruits that, I think, are hardly ever seen in London, those of the passion-flower, the banana, and the loquat, a kind of hollow plum, naturalised from Japan, with a great soft kernel; pumpkins—a vegetable much used in New South Wales, mashed like potatoes—as big as the heads of hydrocephalic giants are heaped within and without the stalls in modest plenty. A few are stored with the multifarious gimcracks of the Lowther Arcade. One is full of European singing-birds, imported by an enterprising German; and hard by, with spectacles on nose, Sandy Mackay keeps watch over his chaos of dingy, battered books. What would Newgate say to the prices of the meat?—beef, 2d.; mutton, 3d. per pound! And these are counted high in New South Wales. On Saturday night, there is a street-market outside, as noisy as its New Cut congener, but far more pleasant to contemplate, since, save a few hopeless old drunkards, you see scarcely any penury or squalor.

The central police station is a little further on. Hither, in the early morning, the *détenus* from the outlying stations are marched two and two. Colonial wit has bestowed the name of 'Constable's Miscellany' upon these police-guarded files. Here all day long the court is crowded with deeply interested idlers. The attorneys that practise there are not the most reputable of their race; but since their practice makes them some of the richest, they care little for its lack of respectability. They tout for custom like Doctors' Commons ticket-porters, hold *al fresco* consultations with their clients, and accept their invitations to step over to 'the London' for a nobbler with the greatest affability.

Past the old burial-ground, with its square, worn tombstones, jumbled together like old boxes, with the directions half-rubbed off, flung inside into a lumber-room—gradually following their tenants into the turf—*Data sunt ipsis fata sepulchris.* This cemetery has long been disused as a resting-place for the dead, but here at night a horde of little city Arabs find their beds. Past that ready-made ruin, the Protestant Cathedral, which will be finished when Cologne's is; down Brickfield Hill, a broad Shoreditch; into the Haymarket, wherein stand wagons, with fragrant freights, reminding you of Whitechapel and Smithfield. But you see no smock-frocks here. Blue flannel shirts, St Andrew's-crossed with leathern braces, bulging, in nautical fashion, over leathern belts, or hanging loose outside the moleskin trousers, are the Australian wagoner's wonted costume.

The road to the right would lead us to the railway—open for some forty miles in a southerly direction—the Glebe, a beautiful suburb of villa-dotted, water-washed bush; the University, a Gothic building of which Pugin might be proud, making with its affiliated denominational colleges, all, like itself, profusely endowed by the local legislature, an elegant, but sadly extravagant little Oxford, out of what, a short time ago, were the bare paddocks of the government Grose Farm; and, if you cross a meadow, to Sydney's *Père la Chaise*, the Newtown Cemetery, where Sir Everard Home, the sailor-naturalist, Sir Thomas Mitchell, the soldier-mechanician, and Bochsa, the harpist, lie buried. A tasteful monument has been erected to the memory of the last by his pupil, Anna Bishop. A lyre with broken strings hangs from a tree, at the foot of which a weeping woman kneels with clasped hands and dishevelled hair. Bochsa only lived long enough to conduct at the first of his gifted *protégée's* unprecedented southern triumphs. Like Mozart, he had composed his own requiem, and it was chanted over his grave. In a common sepulchre lie the bulk of the corpses that were picked up after the wreck of the *Dunbar*. Their funeral was a thrilling spectacle. Almost every shop in Sydney was closed. Thousands followed the melancholy procession, headed by the one survivor as chief mourner. By the lurid light of torches, the solemn farewell words were read over those who had sailed from England full of hope, to be dashed to a horrid death just as they had reached their haven. There they will sleep together until the archangel's trump shall herald the advent of the world wherein there shall be no more sea. On most of the tombstones you read 'late of' some place in the old country. There is to me something very pathetic in this inscription; it carries your thoughts back to English homes with vacant places in them, mourned over with a doubly bitter grief, because those who once filled them died friendless far away.

THE PAINTER'S GOD-SEND.

BEFORE a dirty old curiosity-shop in a by-street of Florence, the grimy and tattered remains of what had once been pictures lay about in picturesque confusion outside the door. Dreadful daubs as most of them were, enough to shock the nerves of any lover of art, they still possessed sufficient charms to attract the attention of a young man who stood before them with a business-like air. After some deliberation, he selected three, and having agreed with the one-eyed Jewish vendor for rather less than a quarter of what he had first asked for them, he carried them home under his arm. His abode was a single room on the fourth story in a narrow street. Putting them down in a corner, he drew out his old leather purse, and threw its contents on the table. 'Twelve pauls!* and that is all my fortune! The four I have just spent on those old pictures was certainly an extravagance.' And the poor young fellow heaved a deep sigh. He might well feel sad. Poor, almost friendless, he had to earn his daily bread by his profession of artist.

The son of a small tradesman, his earliest wish had been to become a painter; and his father, rather proud to see in his son the germs of a talent which would raise him above his own humble station, had sent him to the Florence Academy, where the boy had passed through the usual course of artistic study. In the meantime, his parents died, and he had been thrown on the world, either to rise to distinction, like the few, or, like the many, to live and die in obscure mediocrity, happy if they can sell a few of their copies from the old masters, and so keep the wolf from their doors. Like others in his situation, he felt that he had talent, and while indulging in ambitious hopes, was cramped by poverty; when his brain was teeming with bright, lifelike conceptions, which he longed to fix and realise on the obedient canvas, he had tamely to copy pictures for richer men; he had to submit to humiliating behaviour from them, and be thankful for their patronage, or starve. Once or twice, indeed, he had attempted original pictures; they were admired and praised by his companions, but sold for barely what covered the expense of the colours employed on them! Strive as he might, there was too much competition; poor artists were too numerous for him to expect to attain to anything, unless some one lent him a helping-hand. And where was such a person to be found? So day by day he was compelled to see his desires and hopes fade away, while poverty and disappointment stared him in the face. Yet still he cherished a vague idea of somehow getting on; and just now he had made some compositions, which he longed to execute in living glowing colours. That morning he had received an order to copy a small picture, for six Napoleons. After paying for the materials, he resolved, at whatever cost or privation, to devote the remainder of this sum to carrying out his darling project.

Setting about it in the most economical way, he had bought the three old pictures to paint on, as they came much cheaper than new canvases, and in the afternoon he proceeded to clean them from the thick layer of dirt which had accumulated on them. Taking off his coat, for economy's sake—though it was winter-time—he tucked up his shirt-sleeves, and began rubbing one of them with turpentine. Happy for once in being able to follow his fancies, the look of care that his face usually wore gave place to a contented expression. He looked quite handsome; so at least thought the landlady's daughter when she brought him his frugal supper of soup and bread. He was of that slender build so common among Italians; his hands and feet were small, and his features, without being classical, were regular and fine. A broad square forehead, overhanging dark earnest eyes, that would at times light up with fire; a mouth conveying an impression of a strong will, and resolutely compressed suffering.

The next morning, Silvio—such was his name—rose with the sun, and again set to cleaning the old picture. After some time, he noticed in a corner that a speck of paint had peeled off, exposing a deep warm red under-colour.

'How odd!' said he; 'evidently there is something already painted underneath. A horrid daub, I suppose; still, as I have two hours to spare before the gallery opens, for curiosity's sake I will see what it 's like.'

Taking out his penknife, he gently pressed the point of the blade against the outer painting close by the lighter spot. In a few minutes, another tiny bit of the dark coating cracked off, and uncovered the crimson beneath. Again and again he repeated the operation; and as each piece that scaled off displayed a larger space of the red hue, he was struck by its unusually rich tone.

'*Per mio Santo!* what a fine colour! worthy of the Venetian school. Perhaps it may help as an under-tint.'

Steadily and carefully he continued the tedious way of getting rid of the surface-crust of paint; but so long does this—the surest and best method of removing it—take, that Silvio had only cleared a small space of a couple of inches square, when he was startled by hearing the church-clock strike eleven.

'Eleven! I shall be late for the gallery to-day.'

Snatching up his wide-awake, and hastily pocketing his brushes and a hunch of bread for his luncheon, he strode off to the gallery, where so many artists are engaged in copying the well-known paintings of the early and sixteenth-century masters. He passed quickly by its lines of beautiful pictures, without even looking at them, merely nodding now and then to some acquaintance who was copying before some one of them, and soon sat down at his own easel, there to paint steadily for several hours.

On his return home, he resumed his occupation of scraping and scratching his old picture. Gradually, as more and more was exposed to view, he was surprised at the masterly way in which the red was shaded into a broad dark fold; and presently, when he came on a warm blue, contrasting with it, and yet in perfect harmony, he examined it attentively for a few minutes, and then, throwing down the knife, and bounding up with delight, he exclaimed: 'It is—yes; such touches must be the work of a great painter! I have made a good bargain, I think. Let me see; it probably is a Madonna. This red and blue in juxtaposition cannot be anything else.'

With redoubled energy he recommenced clearing away the dirt; but ere nightfall he resolved to fetch a friend of his, who, being esteemed a good judge in matters of the kind, would be able to tell him with more certainty what sort of a picture it was, and whether it was worth the trouble of clearing. Bursting into his friend's studio like a thunderbolt, without any preamble, he caught him by the arm.

'Caro mio, come with me. I have got a picture which appears to be of some value. I want your opinion on it.'

'Have a moment's patience, and I will be ready directly. Eh! eh! what a hurry you are in!'

'Ah, but do be quick and come along, Pietro mio. I am sure—that is, nearly so—that it is of the Venetian school—such colouring!'

'Ah, indeed! But I suppose that by being a moment later will not injure it—eh?' said the other jocosely as he quietly proceeded to clean his pallet and put it by. It was not long before the two set out arm in arm. Scarcely had they entered Silvio's room—which served him as sleeping-apartment, parlour, and studio, for he could not yet afford to hire a separate painting-room—than he placed the picture in front of his friend. The latter took it up, looked at it sideways, then topsy-turvy; held it at arm's-length from him, and scrutinised it carefully all over, wetting the part of the under-painting that was laid bare. Next the back of the canvas underwent an equally scrupulous examination; and, finally, the sides where the canvas was nailed on to the wooden frame were the object of his special attention. After again taking a long look at it, he laid it on an easel close by, and turning to Silvio, said: 'Silvio mio, you are a lucky fellow!'

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* A *paul* is a Tuscan coin, in value about 5½d. English. A *scudo* is a coin worth 10 pauls.

'Eh?' gasped the other, who, pale with excitement, had been watching his every motion, and scarcely trusted himself to speak.

'I should think so. Why, if I am not very much mistaken, that is either a real Titian, or a painting by one of his scholars. How much did you give for it?'

'Four pauls for that and the two other canvases.'

'Ha! Well, I would willingly give a hundred scudi for it now, just as it is, on the chance.'

'Glorious! My dear Pietro, a thousand thanks!'

'You will sell it to me, then?'

'No, no; I don't mean that; but you have given me grand news indeed. It is as good as a fortune! I am so glad.' And, in the exuberance of his spirits, he shook his friend's hand till the poor man's shoulder ached.

'I'm delighted at this, Silvio. I only wish I could have similar luck. But I sincerely congratulate you.'

After a little more talk, Silvio opened his knife, and was going to proceed with his work, but Pietro stopped him.

'Now, only be careful; remember that a false stroke, a scratch, will diminish both its beauty and its value. Wait at least till you have plenty of light; don't do it now in the twilight.'

So he lighted two *lucerne*—a kind of brass lamp—an unusual extravagance, but certainly permitted on such an extraordinary occasion, and then, all in a tremor with joy, began.

'Listen,' said Pietro. 'To-night, I've nothing to do, and if you like, I will come in and help you.'

'Thanks; I should be much obliged, if it would not inconvenience you.'

'*Che, che.** I shall be back presently.'

The good-natured youth was not long away; and he and Silvio worked on steadily till late in the night. Before he took his leave, they had uncovered a large piece of the blue drapery; it appeared to form part of a flowing mantle, hanging in graceful folds round a standing figure. Many were the surmises they made respecting the subject. At first, they had imagined it to be a Madonna, but they soon perceived it to be a man, for at the top was a beginning of hair, which looked very like a beard. That it was a sacred subject was almost certain, from the broad simplicity of the folds, and from the two orthodox colours—red and blue—which are invariably used in pictures of the Madonna or the Saviour in the Italian schools, being together. Silvio could not retire to rest till he had found this out for certain; so, after Pietro left, he continued working till he had seen enough of the face to convince himself that it was no other than a figure of our Lord—the auburn beard and long hair, the grave sweet mouth, and, above all, the glory behind the head, were proofs sufficient to a painter's eye.

Fatigued nature demanded repose; it was already far on in the small hours, and the oil in his lucerne was burned out. When he woke, it was near ten o'clock. He sprung out of bed, swallowed his coffee in two mouthfuls, and sat down, refreshed and invigorated by his long sleep, to his welcome task. Hour after hour struck, but he did not budge.

'I won't trouble myself about the gallery to-day,' thought he. 'The inspector may scold as much as he pleases, and complain of my neglect of rules and non-attendance. If this succeeds, I shan't care for him.'

In the course of the day his friend dropped in, and on seeing the head, now fully visible, he confirmed his surmise of the previous day. No doubt remained as to whom it represented, but more than half of the canvas was yet covered, and in all probability another figure was to be shewn. The head of our Lord was simply and nobly treated—a profile in Titian's best style, the colours unimpaired by time or the hand of the restorer.

All day long Silvio sat before the picture; later, Pietro again spent his leisure hours with him; and by the end of the next evening, they had freed the whole of the picture from its outer coating of dirt and paint. Well were they rewarded for their trouble, for they contemplated a splendid work of art—two half-length figures, St Peter giving the money that he had found in the fish's mouth to Christ. The Saviour was refined and pure, with uplifted finger, and mild eye fixed on Peter, with whose rough, powerful, rustic head his more elevated type formed a grand contrast.

The two painters had laid it on the easel, and sat on a sofa at a little distance, eyeing it with quiet undemonstrative enthusiasm. Silvio, a little tired from his uninterrupted work, leaned back in a corner, while his imagination frolicked in the future fancy spread before him. Fortune seemed to have given him a chance—who could tell what might be in store for him?

Next day, he took it to an old man whose opinion on the merit of paintings was highly thought of in Florence. His practical eye soon perceived that it was of no small value; and after applying several tests to prove its antiquity, and to assure himself that it had not been retouched, he pronounced it a genuine Titian. Silvio's heart beat high when he heard this from one who was considered a first-rate judge. Still more was he pleased when several more persons corroborated all that he had said, besides—which was more important for Silvio—estimating it at a considerable sum. Artists and connoisseurs went to see the new picture, and all agreed in praising its beauty. Other people went, understanding little or nothing about the matter, and of course admired what they had heard to be beautiful.

One day, an eccentric little Englishman, well known in the artistic world for spending plenty of money, and for never spending it on trash, entered the room where Silvio was busily painting on one of the remaining old canvases, which, by the way, had not turned out by any means such a rare piece of luck as the first. After taking a long look at the Titian, he inquired the price. Silvio mentioned a sum equivalent to about L.900 sterling. The Englishman, who was well aware that more than one person was inclined to purchase it, and might do so in a day or two, turned round, and said in broken Italian, interlaced here and there with a word of his mother-tongue: 'Look here, signor: you know I am not a man of many words; for fifty scudi less than the amount you named, I will take it.'

Silvio did not answer for a minute. Fifty scudi was a great deal to him, and yet this man had the name of being strictly honest and punctual in his payments, and the same could not be said of all those who were in treaty with him.

'I am sorry, signor, but I think it worth what I ask, and I don't like to let it go under.'

'Well, remember that I pay you the day I receive the picture; it is for you to consider whether it will be worth your while to close with my offer. You know my address. I shall be at home this evening, and you can then let me have your decisive answer. Think it over till then.'

He did think it over, and decided to take the Englishman's offer; he only stipulated to be allowed to keep the painting for a week longer, so as to make a copy of it for himself.

Silvio was now a comparatively rich man. He hired a studio, and indulged himself in composing and executing some historical pieces for the annual Florentine Exhibition. They had a complete success: and the discovery of the Titian having already got him a name, orders poured rapidly in. It was only a few months back that Silvio was in London—the rage of the artistic circles—where he himself modestly narrated the history of his own success.

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* *Che, che.* An expression much used in Tuscany, meaning 'No, no.'

WAYS OF WILD-FOWL.

Few departments of natural history are more pleasing than those which relate to the manners and habits of wild-fowl. They are all of them great travellers, and regularly pass over the whole hemisphere to which they belong, from the polar circle to the equator, resting on the summits of mountains, in the depths of forests, or on the borders of lakes and rivers. On the elevated plains or steppes of Central Asia, these aërial populations perform their evolutions with the greatest freedom and regularity. In the middle of summer, they are found beyond the northern limits of Siberia, fishing and enjoying themselves in the icy sea. This is especially the case with the wild swans and geese, which, as they move northward through the air, with loud screams and clamour, are welcomed with delight by the rude inhabitants. They look forward as they gaze to the enjoyment of innumerable feasts, the materials of which they then behold cleaving the blue sky in vast wedge-like battalions, with a strong, bold leader in front, and the weaker and more timid fliers bringing up the rear. It is difficult to imagine a spectacle more beautiful than a flight of wild swans on a summer's day. Their whiteness is so dazzling that they look like huge snow-flakes drifting before the gale, while, as the light plays upon their breasts, it communicates to them a rosy blush, glancing off tremulously into the atmosphere as they advance.

The travels of the wild geese and swans extend from far beyond Siberia to the Caspian Sea, Lake Aral, and the plains of Asia Minor. Here the traveller beholds them in winter, sometimes settling on the waters of the Meandee, sometimes spreading themselves over the morasses, where in hundreds of diminutive lakes they recall to mind the bogs, swamps, and immense sheets of water in which they carry on their gambols during the hot months, in the precincts of the north pole. It is curious to notice them in the vicinity of a Turkoman encampment, walking boldly up, almost close to the tents, and extorting hospitality from the half-frightened, half-delighted children. We ourselves are still favoured with the visits of the wild goose, but its friend and companion in the solitudes of Asia refuses to accompany it to our shores, where it was once found in abundance, especially on the rivers of the fens.

In the neighbouring countries of the continent, the snipe, the woodcock, the coot, the teal, the wild duck, perform nearly the same movements as the swans in Asia. During the summer heats, they find their subsistence amid the elevations of the Alps and the Pyrenees, where, as you ascend higher and higher, you perceive on the banks of each lonely stream and tarn the summer sunbeams glancing from their wings. With the increase of the cold and the coming on of sleet and snow storms, these birds desert their favourite solitudes, and descend in search of food nearer to the dwellings of man; but the influence of their original tastes and habits is still discernible. They cling to the skirts of forests and to springs, 'mid the recesses of the hills, or alight on the interior of marshes, where, protected by wildernesses of reeds and flags, they dive into the mud in search of food.

High up in the Nile Valley, birds of similar propensities enjoy much greater safety and freedom than in Europe. The river is there engaged in creating the country it is hereafter to fertilise. Spreading into immense expanses, and following no certain channel, it stagnates amid whole forests of rushes, reeds, and other aquatic plants, whose stems arrest the silt which the water holds in suspense, and precipitate it to the bottom, where it constitutes layer upon layer, the foundation of some future Egypt. Here is the very paradise of wild-fowl. Sometimes near the edge of the water you behold the long-legged flamingo standing knee-deep in the flood, and appearing like the fragment of a rainbow with its gorgeous and brilliant colours, satisfying his humble appetite with sundry kinds of mud-fish. The natives entertain strange notions of this bird. Believing in the doctrine of the metempsychosis, they assert that it is animated by the soul of a great and proud sultan of the Indies, who, in punishment of his vanity, was transformed into a bird, and, allowed to retain the splendour of his costume, banished for many thousand years into the wastes of Africa.

All round amid the tufts of luxuriant vegetation you perceive specks of water-fowl; ducks fat as the teal of Winnebago Lake, herons, storks, pelicans, wild geese, the white rice-bird, the black ibis—no longer seen below the cataracts—with many other kinds for which our northern vocabulary has no names. These birds convert such swamps, half-mud, half-water, into breeding-places; and therefore, as your boat moves hither and thither among the matted aquatic verdure, you behold their large eggs, glossy white, or blue, shining forth between the roots of the plants, which at a later period swarm with young nurslings of all hues.

As might have been expected, this profusion of life attracts many birds of prey. Early and late, on the pinnacle of some neighbouring ridge, or on the lofty branches of a doum palm, or of an African sycamore, you observe the white eagle perched in eager anticipation, or see it descending like an arrow into the morass, or mounting, gorged and blood-dripping, towards its distant eyrie. This eagle is peculiarly beautiful: its eye does not blink at the noonday sun, and its sight is so piercing, that a mouse moving along the sand is beheld by it from above the clouds. Lower down in the valley, it may be often noticed sitting on the naked rocks glowing and half-calcined by the heat. But it is conscious of no inconvenience, or, if it be, one excursion into the upper air, where it is almost immediately lost to sight, restores coolness, and enables it to resume its destructive meditations on the river's banks. This terrible bird presents a striking contrast to the black cormorant of the Cape, which dislikes loneliness as much as the African eagle loves it. Perched upon the cliffs in company with divers and penguins, it seems, with its sable brethren, to constitute a sort of mysterious conclave assembled to decide on the fate of Africa. This heavy lumbering bird does not take the trouble to build a nest at all, but lays its eggs in holes of the rock, hollowed out for it by nature. Here the insatiable appetite of its young justifies the old saying, 'as greedy as a cormorant;' for although constantly gorged by their industrious fisher-parents, yet they are never satisfied, but with open beak, eager eye, and outstretched neck, flap their formless wings, and appear like the horse-leech to be continually crying out 'Give, give!'

These cormorants form a sort of social polity, keeping together both on land and sea. As they lay their eggs and watch over their young in company, so in company they provide for their own subsistence, as well as for that of their offspring. If, while at the Cape, you visit any unfrequented part of the shore, especially at an early hour of the morning, you may watch with great interest and amusement the strategy, evolutions, and tactics of these dusky fishers. From the apertures and pinnacles of the cliffs, the cormorants descend in great numbers to the water, lying calm and tranquil between the outstretched horns of rocky promontories. Here they dispose themselves in single file, and with an old experienced bird in the van, put out to sea. The black viking, at once adventurous and wary, selects the smoothest parts of the bay; and when his keen sight detects a shoal of fish below, he pauses for a moment to make a signal to his followers. Arching his long neck, and keeping his eyes fixed upon the waves, he rises on the wing, throws back his feet, and then plunging down headforemost, is in a moment gorging fiercely among the shoal. All the other cormorants immediately imitate his example, and may in a short time be seen rising to the glassy surface with their prey glistening in their bills.

All round the African continent, except on its eastern fringes, life assumes the feathered form with infinite prodigality. In the sandy wastes of the interior, it is altogether different. There you may travel for days and weeks, sometimes for whole months, without beholding a bird, except, as you approach the oases, pigeons and turtle-doves; or occasionally, in certain tracts of the desert, an eagle far aloft in the blue ether, darting eastward or westward, like an arrow of golden light. On the skirts of the villages, and about the wells, where there are nearly always palm-trees, the doves come in troops in search of food and water. There is also a sort of long-billed bird without a European appellation, which in flights of fifteen or twenty, hover about the wells, and as soon as the men cease working at the water-wheels, dart down to drink.

A traveller, resting in one of these Saharan villages, used to soothe his loneliness with the notes of some little birds, in shape not unlike the sparrow, which came every morning and sang on his house-top. Their voices seemed full of the sweetness of childhood, and carried him over thousands of miles of sea and land, back to that part of England where he had passed his early years.

A whole volume might be written on the habits and manners of oceanic birds, every variety of which is invested with a cluster of poetical associations. Most of our readers will probably remember Barry Cornwall's beautiful lyric on the stormy petrel, which peoples the fancy with grand images of solitude far out upon the purple deep. Voyagers who traverse the Indian Ocean watch with peculiar pleasure the evolutions of this bird, and one of them thus speaks of its most striking characteristics: 'These wild and free-born denizens of the deep seem to sport in all the consciousness of liberty; they cleave the atmosphere of their boundless home on rapid wing, soaring aloft with the lightness of a feathery cloud; they skim the surface of the deep, they float upon its bosom, and I have seen the storm-loving petrel, that "wanderer of the sea," dive beneath the waters to secure its prey. They always love the stormy ocean, for then their food is more easily procured; and when the scud begins to rise, when the wind blows high, and the billows are crested with foam, the petrels are abroad.'

There is much grandeur in the vast habitation of eastern sea-birds. Taking our departure from the Cape of Storms, and passing over Madagascar, we have, on the left, Mozambique, the Kuria Muria group, Persia, India within and beyond the Ganges, China, Corea, and Japan, and on the right, the immense archipelagoes of Australasia. Throughout this extensive division of the globe, sea-fowl arrogate to themselves whole clusters of islands, where they have lived, built their nests, deposited their eggs, and brought up their young for thousands upon thousands of years unmolested by man. The Kuria Muria, recently regarded as a prolific guano-field, figures in the stories and traditions of the Arabs as one of the kingdoms of the birds, where they ruled supreme, built themselves superb dwellings, and rigidly forbade the intrusion of any other creature. Amid the rocky cliffs of Socotra also, the sea-birds of the Indian Ocean have established themselves in vast multitudes, so that the mariner as he sails by may behold at early dawn variegated living clouds, soaring aloft above his head, or sweeping with celerity along the blue surface of the waves. Still further on, and away down to the right, there is a small group occupying one of the most striking positions on the globe. All the way from the northern polar circle to that latitude, the sounding-line can generally, if not always, reach the bottom; but there the plummet becomes useless, for the mighty table-land of rock, out of which spring so many thousands of islands, descends sheer to an immeasurable depth, which defies even the fancy to follow it. On the very edge of this descent stands what has been very properly denominated Danger Island, which, so far as we know, has never but once been visited by man. Separated from the rest of the group by no great breadth of sea, it is yet preserved from human intrusion by terror. It has no landing-place, no bay, creek, cove, or indenture of the coast, but is belted round by lofty perpendicular cliffs, against which the huge surges of the Indian Ocean break perpetually in foam and thunder. Within the circle, however, of these dreadful rocks the surface of the island presents a little paradise. Trees of gigantic growth stretch along the cliffs, and suspend their evergreen foliage over the waves. Beyond these, there is a wilderness of flowering-plants and shrubs of rare beauty, gemming the soft mossy knolls and hollows which, at certain seasons of the year, form the common nest of millions of sea-birds, which, when they rise on the wing, literally darken the air, while they fill it with a deafening murmur, like that which ascends from a prodigious army thrown suddenly into confusion.

The singular chance which rendered a visit to this island practicable was as follows: a surveying-ship lying near for several weeks, observed one morning a lull in the ocean—its usual roar was suspended—and the breakers about the perilous precipices no longer appeared. The opportunity was immediately seized upon. A boat filled with English officers and sailors put off from the ship, and pulled vigorously towards the mysterious rock. After circling it round and round, some fissures in the cliff were discovered, through which it seemed possible to climb. Up went the whole party, despising difficulty and danger, and as the strange apparitions made their appearance, away, with screams and shrieks, flew the terrified birds. All the knowledge we possess of Danger Island was then obtained. After a hasty exploration, the adventurous surveyors retraced their steps, and the breakers resumed the eternal monotony of their roar.

Not altogether dissimilar is another haunt of sea-fowl in the same ocean, though considerably further to the east; this is a glaring patch of white sand set in a coral frame, a mile and a half wide, and encircled on all sides by breakers, with a magnificent overfall. Very recent charts of the Sooloo group may perhaps have it marked, but it is not to be found in Horsburgh. The sides of this island descend precipitously into the sea, and that to so great a depth that no bottom is to be found with the hand-lead. All the sand in the interior has the appearance of one huge nest covered with sea-birds in all stages of growth, from the little unfledged creature just escaped from the shell, 'to the old full-grown guardians of their progeny.' When visitors approach, the old birds display great courage in the exercise of their paternal duties; they hover shrieking close over the heads of the strangers, and make so vigorous an opposition to their advance, that the way has to be cleared by knocking them down with sticks.

No naturalist, with competent leisure and opportunities, has yet examined a thousandth part of those oceanic bird-cradles, where it is probable several new species will be found, more curious and beautiful than any yet known. Strange habits, which appear almost fabulous, are attributed to some of the winged tribes. There is, for example, a small owl in Central America which takes up its abode in the same burrow with the marmot and the rattlesnake. In fine weather you may often see the members of the triple population sitting at the entrance to their dwellings. On the approach of a stranger, the marmot first retreats into the fortification, the owl next follows, while the lazy rattlesnake brings up the rear.

On the coast of Borneo, a bird is found which the natives call *menambun* or the builder, on account of the extraordinary skill with which it constructs its nest. In form and colour, it resembles the francolin or heath-cock. The wonderful structure on which we bestow the name of nest, usually found upon the sandy shore above high-water mark, is often upwards of sixty feet in circumference, and nearly five feet high. Occasionally, the bird takes advantage of a fallen tree to form a sort of nucleus for its operations, and about this heaps up loose portions of the sandy soil into the shape of a flattish barrow. It then bores, by scratching with its toes, a deep hole in the mound, and at the bottom clears a space wherein to lay its eggs. In the following season, it appears to become dissatisfied with its old apartments; but instead of removing to a distance, constructs an addition to the mound, and excavates in it a fresh chamber. In this way it proceeds enlarging its dwelling indefinitely, until there are numerous entrances above, and hollow cells below. From one of these to another it sometimes opens subterranean galleries, which hasty explorers fill up while digging. Here and there, in the interior of the barrow, eggs are found, some newly laid, others half hatched, while there are others again from which the birds have emerged. They come out full feathered, and so strong as to be able to scratch immediately, and provide for their own subsistence. The habitat of the menambun is not extensive, being confined to the small islands which stud the coast of Borneo, and those of the Sooloo group.

Proceeding further towards the south, we find, in the upper regions of Australia, a beautiful species of starling, of brilliant plumage, which glances with metallic lustre as its feathers in motion receive the rays of light. It lives among the thickets near the shore; and to guard against the inroads of its enemies, erects its habitation on trees of almost inaccessible height. One of our voyagers found, near Cape York, nearly fifty specimens at once of the extraordinary nest of this bird. They were all suspended from the outer branches of a gigantic cotton-tree, where, light and pensile, they rocked, or swung to and fro in the passing breeze. To obtain one of them was a matter of no small difficulty. The trunk of the cotton-tree, at least twelve feet in circumference, and shooting up straight without boughs for upwards of sixty feet, seemed to defy all attempts at climbing. The naturalist, therefore, had recourse to his rifle, and sought to detach with ball the branches on which the nests hung; but the wind swaying them hither and thither, defeated his skill. A native then volunteered his services, and throwing the branch of a wild vine about the cotton-tree, worked his way up, just as the Arabs climb the loftiest date-palms. The young found in the nests were thrown, by the Australian, alive into the fire, and eaten half raw.

One of the most striking scenes in which wild-fowl make their appearance is a calm at sunset on the tropical ocean. There is always a swell and tremulous sensation in the vast deep, upon which the sun, going down in fiery splendour, sheds a crimson glow. Then the ship lies almost motionless upon the water, and the birds, which had been its companions by day, take their leave, some flying towards land invisible and far away, some to those solitary rocks which, at wide intervals, stud the ocean. But the ghost-like albatross, as he has been not unaptly denominated, wheels about in vast circles till he is lost in the darkness. Thus deserted by the inhabitants of the air, the mariner's fancy is befriended by the more constant denizens of the waves, who throw out their shining floats, and sparkle and glitter like a shower of stars on the dark surface of the ocean.

Even here, in our own country, where we imagine ourselves familiar with all the forms of nature, extremely curious spectacles are sometimes to be witnessed. Bird-catchers in the fens, carrying on their calling by night, disperse themselves over the marshes and along the banks of streams with torches in their hands. These they wave to and fro, to attract or dazzle the birds, which, while they are wondering at the strange appearance, are enveloped in nets. One of our old writers amuses himself with describing the stupidity of the dotterel, which imitated the grimaces and antics of the fowler, stretching out its wings when he spread forth his arms, hopping when he hopped, nodding when he nodded, and becoming, at length, so absorbed by the interest of the pantomime, that he was fairly knocked upon the head before he could rouse himself to a sense of his danger.

We had noted down many other facts connected with the ways of wild-fowl in various parts of the world, but mindful of the old proverb, that 'enough is as good as a feast,' we pause here, though we could have wished to enlarge a little on the airy populations of the Alps, the Himalaya, and the Andes, together with those which haunt the vast lakes and frozen rivers of the north.

THE PRAYER OF THE POOR FOR THE POOR.

I asked for wealth to aid the poor,
Whose pitied wounds I may not heal;
Whose presence I but ill endure,
So helpless is the grief I feel:
When thus, methought, the Lord replied:
'The world, with all its wealth, is mine;
My hand of love, if opened wide,
Would need no trembling aid from *thine*.'

'O give me wealth,' again I said,
'That I may taste the sweet employ
Of giving orphan children bread,
Of filling widowed hearts with joy!'
And knowing well my deep distress,
His pitying voice replied to me:
'The whispered prayer, the wish to bless,
Are all I now require of thee.'

Yet once again I dared to sigh:
'The rich who love Thy work are few;
Let *me* but pass "the needle's eye"
To bear Thy gifts securely through!'
The Voice replied in accents mild:
'Both good and evil work for me;
If thou wert rich, repining child,
Thou, like the rest, mightst faithless be!

'Mourn less, yet combat more, the ill
Thou didst not cause, and canst not cure;
'Tis thine to bear thy Father's will,
'Tis His to aid the helpless poor.
And e'en in this desponding hour,
Thou feel'st that 'tis the better part
To have the heart, devoid of power,
Than having power, to lack the heart.'—R. R.

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A VISIT TO A CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION.

WHILE lately at Bradford, in Yorkshire, attending the meeting of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science—and a very pleasant and instructive meeting it was—I accidentally heard some particulars respecting a Co-operative Society at Rochdale, which seemed to excite in others as well as myself no little surprise. I heard of a large body of working-men, most of them factory-hands, being associated in a gigantic scheme of trading for mutual benefit; that the scheme, after fifteen years of trial, had proved eminently successful; that, influenced by its example, other associations of a similar kind were springing up in different parts of Yorkshire and Lancashire; and that, in short, no man could tell where all this strange movement was to end. To me the intelligence was not altogether new, for I had formerly heard of, and even helped to disseminate through these pages, some account of this very association; but the subject, as now presented, seemed, on public grounds, so peculiarly deserving of personal examination, that I resolved to pay a passing visit to Rochdale, and so be able to judge, in some measure, for myself. I accordingly took Rochdale in my way home, and what I saw and learned on the spot, I am now going to do my best to describe.

It may, perhaps, be as well to say at once, that there prevails some little misconception regarding the principles of the co-operative system. Society in its higher departments has unfortunately become so jealous of projects for substituting co-operation for individual competition, that the schemes which I am about to notice are looked on with suspicion, as if they sprung from the crotchets of Socialists, Owenites, St Simonians, and other dreamers. Now, let it be distinctly understood, that co-operation in the sense now alluded to, has no connection whatever with socialistic notions. It proposes neither to upset society, nor to meddle with religious or political opinions. It is purely a method of carrying on industrial operations, with the view of imparting the greatest amount of benefit to the parties concerned. Its aims are commercial, not revolutionary; though it will be admitted that it may ultimately place the relationship of employer and employed on a footing very different from what it is on at present. At all events, be its future what it may, let us look it fairly in the face, instead of unwisely ignoring its really remarkable features.

After rolling onward through a series of picturesque valleys, each of them a hive of manufacturing industry, the train arrived in Rochdale, a town within the borders of Lancashire. We had left the region of worsteds, and had got into that of woollens and cottons—all being alike a scene of wonderful activity. Little time was spent in finding the objects of inquiry. Accompanied by a gentleman who acted as a friendly guide, I was conducted to Toad Lane, a steepish thoroughfare, and stood in front of the several establishments, which, by signs over the door, purported to belong to the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers' Society. 'You see,' said my friend, 'there is nothing fine about the place; they are just common shops for the sale of articles. There were three shops belonging to the Society—one on the right-hand side in going down the street, and two on the left—the concern having evidently outgrown its original dimensions, and been fain to get house-room in any form near at hand. The right-hand store was apparently the ancient and metropolitan centre of affairs; and besides the shop, which contained two counters, there were apartments up stairs, appropriated to different purposes. The higher floor, reached by a separate door and stair, consisted of a room for board meetings, which was lined with presses full of books, and of another apartment used as a reading-room.

To procure proper information, I went first to one of the places opposite, to see the clerk or book-keeper in charge. Here, the street floor contained a broad table for the cutting up and sale of meat; above was a store-room for flour and other articles, also an office with a desk and ledgers, in charge of a respectable young man, named William Cooper. By some persons, my visit might have been deemed impertinent and intrusive; but so far from there being any notion of the kind in this case, Mr Cooper frankly answered all my inquiries, and seemed rather pleased than otherwise to make me acquainted with the history and working of the concern. He likewise conducted me to the third shop belonging to the Society, which was appropriated to the sale of materials for wearing-apparel; and finally, I visited the library and reading-room. I understood there were several branch-stores in the town, but these we did not think it necessary to see.

It may be supposed that the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers' Society did not reach its present flourishing condition without encountering innumerable difficulties; and its ultimate triumph over these offers the best proof of the courage, perseverance, and honesty of its members. Like everything great and estimable, it has grown from small beginnings. Little by little, step by step, without flash or parade—rather courting obscurity—it at length attains a magnitude and distinction which it may be presumed to have fairly merited. Those who wish to do likewise, will need no persuasives to study its simple, yet eventful history. The Society dates from 1844. It originated in the efforts of a few weavers to better a condition which Chartism, strikes, communism, and other pretentious agencies left pretty much as they found it. The main thing at first aimed at was the establishment of a store for the sale of provisions and clothing, in order to participate in the profits of dealers in these articles. It was felt that if wages could not be factitiously increased, there was no reason why they should not be made the best of as they stood. At first, there were serious difficulties in the way. The men were poor; there was a general scepticism as to success, on account of previous failures of co-operative plans; perhaps, also, there was a distrust of each other in regard to money-matters, not uncommon among the hand-labouring classes. Daunted neither by derision nor frowns, the determined little band quietly pursued their course. By dividing the town into districts, and appointing collectors, the committee of management contrived to scrape together somewhere about L.36. A third of the sum collected was spent on some absolutely necessary fixtures and shop apparatus; there being left about L.24 wherewith to lay in a stock to begin business. A commencement in a humble way was made in a shop rented at L.10 per annum. It was sneeringly observed that the whole stock in trade of the weavers' association could have been carried away in a wheel-barrow, which was probably quite true; but as matters improved, the stock by and by would have filled a cart; and always as the thing grew in dimensions, critics lowered their tone. Fears and fault-finding gave place to surprise and respect.

Planted in a populous town, composed of families living on weekly wages, there was no valid reason why the concern should not succeed. Everything was in its favour. The credit-system, which had foundered all preceding attempts, was most resolutely avoided. All purchases and all sales were for ready money, or 'brass,' as it is called in Yorkshire. No matter what were the exigencies, or what the character, of buyers, down they must lay the brass on the counter before an article could be removed. By this means there was little need for book-keeping and figuring. I had been informed that the Society employed no hired assistants, but this I found to be a mistake. In the infancy of experience, an attempt was made to depend on volunteer assistance, which to some extent turned out satisfactorily; but confusion ensued in the accounts; and it was at length obvious that a co-operative store is subject to the principle of division of labour, like any other kind of business. Originally, the store was opened only at certain hours; but this arrangement, for good reasons, was also departed from. In 1851, the limited-hour system was given up, and the store opened all day; a regular superintendent and shopmen being at the same time appointed. At present, there is a considerable force of hired assistants, who, however, are themselves shareholders, and therefore actuated by the common interest. Besides adherence to the ready-money system, there were other good grounds of success. In ordinary shopkeeping, there is a certain loss from the exposure of articles in windows, from finical ways of putting up goods, from high rents, from advertising, and from over-costly assistance. Should we not also point to the loss from excessive competition, which in some businesses is greater than all other losses put together? To drive each other from the field, drapers, for example, may be seen attracting customers by offering goods at ruinously low prices; and how often are these unseemly struggles maintained out of capital, or by means of credit—the reckless shopkeeper, who never intends to pay, being of course indifferent as to the extent of his so-called 'sacrifices.'

It doubtless required a great degree of firmness in the workmen co-operators to withstand the temptation to trade-rivalry. While their aim at setting out was, strictly, to sell their goods at wholesale prices, *plus* an allowance for expenses, it was necessary that the concern should be safe; therefore, a certain margin of profit—however that might ultimately be disposed of—became necessary. As, after all this was allowed for, their prices were still below those of the ordinary shops, they unavoidably raised feelings of emulation in the shopkeepers, some of whom endeavoured, by temporarily striking below them, to run them off the field. But, disregarding these efforts, they never once swerved from the principle they had assumed at starting. 'Others,' said they, 'may profess to sell cheaply, we are determined to sell honestly.' They will be honoured for the resolution.

The articles sold at the store were at first few in number, but with increase of sales the list of commodities was gradually extended; departments for shoemaking and tailoring were added to the establishment; and, last of all, the Society ventured into wholesale dealing. Meanwhile, the number of co-operators was also largely increased. From only 28 members in 1844, the number had risen to 600 in 1850; at the time of my visit, it was 2400. With a view to a proper performance of its functions, the association, soon after its commencement, was registered pursuant to act of parliament (13 and 14 Vict. chap. 115). The following are among the benefits derived from this beneficent act. The rules of the Society are binding, and may be legally enforced: protection is given to the members, their wives, children, and heirs in enforcing their just claims, and against any fraudulent dissolution of the Society: the property of the Society is declared to be vested in the trustee or treasurer for the time being: the trustee or treasurer may, with respect to the property of the Society, sue and be sued in his own name: fraud committed with respect to the property of the Society is punishable by justices: county courts may compel transfer of stock, if any officer of this Society abscond or refuse to transfer: application may be made to the Court of Chancery by petition, free from payment of court or counsel's fees: disputes to be settled by reference to justices or arbitrators, and the order of justices or arbitrators to be final, with power to award compensation to any member, if unjustly expelled: in case of the death of any member, payment may be made of any sum not exceeding L.20, without the expense, &c., of obtaining letters of administration: members are allowed to be witnesses in all proceedings, criminal or civil, respecting property of the Society.

Although, strictly speaking, a joint-stock company with unlimited responsibility, there are some remarkable special differences in the method of buying into and selling out of the concern. The plan originally adopted was to constitute shares of L.1; each member was to hold only four shares—now, the number is five shares. At entry, a member was to pay not less than one shilling, and the sum of not less than threepence per week afterwards, till the value of his shares was paid up. Such payments constituted the capital stock on which to trade. Interests and profits accruing to members were carried to their credit until their shares were paid up. As soon as that happy point was reached, the member received his interest and profits every three months in cash, or he might add them to his account, and so increase his number of shares. No member, however, could own more than L.100 of stock; but I see it stated that, by a recent act, the amount is increased to L.200. In joint-stock companies, there are usually various formalities in connection with the purchasing and transferring of stock. The plan followed by the Co-operative Society is very simple. A candidate for membership, on being approved of by the board of directors, pays a shilling and threepence to the cashier, who enters the sum to credit in a little pass-book, which the person keeps as a voucher. Week after week, he continues his payments, so as to enlarge the amount at his credit. As soon as his shares are paid up, he receives interest, at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum. The payment of interest may be said to be a first charge on the realised profits of trading. Should more capital be invested than is required, the directors may order members to take back a portion of their money. The most remarkable of the arrangements is, that there is no system of transfers. When a man gets tired of being a member, or, from any other cause, wishes to retire, he cannot sell his stock. On announcing his intention of withdrawal, his account is balanced, and he receives the amount at his credit. Thus there are always parties drawing out, and others paying in. When a member dies, the Society clears scores with his representative. In this way, as the stock of each member is a thing personal to himself, it can never become an object of jobbery—cannot rise to a premium or fall to a discount. The first shilling paid in and the last shilling at the credit of a member on drawing out, are carried to a fund called Redemption-money, which is designed to make good the deterioration of property. Subject to these petty deductions, every member will at any time receive back all he has paid in.

Now let us describe the buying process. The stores, as has been said, are open all day, and a throng, particularly on Saturday night, is seen at the counters. Everything is paid for in cash. Whatever be the sum, a tin ticket with the corresponding amount stamped on it is given to the purchaser. If he buys a shilling's worth of tea, a ticket with 'one shilling' impressed on it is received on laying down the money. These tickets are vouchers for purchases. They are kept by the buyer till the end of the quarter, and being then produced, it is seen what has been the aggregate amount of his purchases. If they amount, say to L.5, the proportional profit accruing on L.5 during the quarter is either at once paid, or carried to the credit of the buyer in his pass-book. As the stores are open to the public as well as to the cooperators, tin tickets are given to outsiders on their making purchases the same as if they were members. These tickets, as representing claims for a share of profits, are usually disposed of to members of the Society, who accordingly rank for their value at the quarterly settlements.

At the end of 1858, the Equitable Pioneers' Co-operative Society consisted of 1950 members, and the funds amounted to L.18,160, 5s. 4d.; the business done during the year was L.71,689; and the profit made, L.6284, 17s. 4½d. The average weekly receipt was L.1600. We have to add a still more interesting fact. Two and a half per cent. off net profits were, by the constitution of the Society, devoted to what are termed educational purposes; properly speaking, the support of the library and reading-room. The library now contains 3000 volumes of useful and entertaining literature; the tables of the reading-room are covered with papers, and the loan of books and perusal of papers are alike free.

So rapidly grew the assets of the Society, that, in 1850, it was found expedient to throw off a swarm of members to make a new association; or, what was, perhaps, nearer the truth, those members whose accounts had reached the legal limit, were induced to devote a portion of their money towards founding a fresh industrial concern. The idea struck upon was to get up a flour-mill. An association designated the Rochdale Corn-mill Society was set on foot on principles similar to those of the parent institution. A corn-mill was at first rented, about a mile and a half from the town. Unfortunately, through the mismanagement of the persons employed, and also some prejudices which had to be overcome as to the quality of the flour, the mill was not successful during its early years. At length, as things began to mend, it was resolved to build a mill in the town, and carry on the manufacture of flour according to the most approved methods. In a short time, the mill was erected, and filled with the best machinery. I went to see this mill, which is situated on the small river from which the town derives its name. It is a huge building, five stories high; the machinery being moved by a steam-engine of from thirty to forty horse-power. There were fourteen grinding apparatuses in active operation; the amount of grain received and turned into flour and meal being 1400 sacks per week. The total average weekly delivery, according to the last published statement, was nearly 930 loads, each load weighing 240 lbs. The assets of the Society amounted to L.17,744. The number of shareholders is, I believe, 500, who, in 1858, divided among them L.1425 of profit.

This second success, as we must call it, led to still higher aspirations. Why should not the co-operatives of Rochdale start the manufacture of cotton or woollen fabrics? The question was soon settled in the affirmative, and the Rochdale Manufacturing Society was commenced. The principles of organisation were still the same; the members wholly working-men. In this more ambitious scheme, we touch, for the first time, on the co-operation of artisans in a great branch of manufacture for mutual benefit. There was nothing particularly new or wonderful in a number of prudent factory-workers clubbing their shillings to set up a store for the sale of provisions, clothing, and other articles of domestic consumption; but to unite their small means in building and working a factory was to enter on a field of enterprise of an extensive kind, and where the perils were proportionally great.

The capital of the Rochdale Co-operative Manufacturing Society (registered pursuant to the act 15 and 16 Vict. c. 31) was raised by voluntary subscriptions, consisting of shares of L.5 each. The rules specified that each member shall not take less than two such shares, which may be paid up at once or by instalments of one shilling per week. The account of this concern, given in the *Equitable Pioneers' Almanac*, speaks of L.13,000 having been raised at the end of 1858, during which year the capital had more than doubled. I was told that the members are now about 1300 in number. In this, as in preceding projects, not too much was attempted at first. The Society rented an upper floor for carrying on cotton-spinning, and also the lower floor of another establishment for power-loom weaving. I walked through the town to see these places. The spinning-machinery was not in motion at the time; but I had the pleasure of seeing at work nearly 100 power-looms, which were attended by men having shares in the undertaking. So far the Society has been successful; and to carry on its operations on a scale equal to that of any ordinary cotton-factory, it is at present engaged in erecting a building which with its machinery is to cost L.40,000. This, too, I visited, though nothing is as yet to be seen but a large building in process of rising from confused heaps of bricks and mortar. The factory is expected to be at work about May or June next, when it will be a sight worth seeing. I inquired if the capital was all subscribed and paid up, and was informed that money is coming in at the rate of about £2000 per month, and that, in fact, it comes rather faster than is wanted. It will be curious to watch the development of this gigantic effort of operatives to be their own employers. All are, in the first place, to be paid the market value of their labour, and afterwards, at periodical settlements, to receive a share of profits proportional to their invested capital. If this arrangement does not produce a sense of responsibility, with diligence in working, I know not what will. Supposing it to be honestly and successfully carried out, the dissatisfaction which leads to strikes in factories will be entirely removed. To insure as far as possible against discord, all members, according to the rules of the Society, are to have the same amount of votes and influence, whatever be the extent of their investments—a thorough out-and-out democracy.

In making my inquiries, I hinted at certain possibilities of disaster as regarded each of the co-operative projects. I spoke of that too common misfortune, a want of integrity in money-matters—might not one or more of the parties in the management get possession of and abscond with the funds? In reply, I was told of the rules by which money can only be drawn from the bank account by an order of three directors signed at a board meeting and counter-signed by the treasurer; and that, at all events, there never had been any loss from this fertile source of ruin in Friendly Societies. I next referred to the risks of trade. In selling its produce, the Society must give the ordinary credit. The answer was, that the credit usually given in wholesale transactions was but fourteen days, and that care would be taken to deal only with perfectly trustworthy merchants. Besides, a small sinking fund would be a sufficient insurance against losses of serious amount.

Here, I leave these remarkable instances of working-men taking the business of 'masters' into their own hands. That they will have the good wishes of every philanthropist, cannot be doubted. Although surrounded with many practical difficulties, the associations I have attempted to describe are, to all appearance, destined to maintain their ground both as regards commercial and social results. Productive in a large degree of the sentiment of *hope*, without which we may in vain look for any marked improvement of habits, I was assured that they had already effected a visible improvement in the condition of the working-classes. Self-respect, provident foresight, temperance, and domestic comfort, had on all sides been largely promoted through their agency. W. C.

THE DOOMED SKATER.

We had cast our lot, my twin-brother and myself, in the roughest township of Upper Canada. Twenty years are in their grave since then—twenty years, rung out and rung in by the clang of the woodman's axe—and still that township lies in the heart of its primeval forest. Clotted woods overhang the solitary village, composed of a few log-huts, nightly drenched, as with a death-sweat, from the malaria of the swamp. But we came, young and impressionable, from the Old Country, on a venturous quest after fortune in the bush, and the dishevelled wilderness of thicket had its charms for us.

A river reft the huge tangle of the woods with its dark sluggish waters, which crept and oozed in amongst decaying trees on either side. Banks there were none, and the bleached skeletons of the rotten trees alone marked off the channel of the river from the dark fen, fetid with myriad impurities. Such was the aspect of the melancholy Scugog. Our village was by no means a large one. The scattered huts which made it up had been knocked together by a sprinkling of hardy pioneers, on a solitary bluff which repelled the river from its base, and gave to fearless settlers some ground of 'vantage over the surrounding swamp. There was not, however, much cleared ground — nay, very little; everywhere we were hemmed in by battalion after battalion of monotonous trees. Not all the pioneer chivalry of the world could cut an open way through their ranks. Like brave hearts on a battle-field, when one serried line fell, lo! another had arisen in their place. As for our fellow-settlers, we found them of a piece with the country—rough and hardy, as they had need to be who, twenty years ago, colonised the Scugog.

We were twins, Jack and I, but otherwise unlike. He was a fine fellow; I acknowledged his supremacy, and rejoiced in his bold free spirit. From his childhood he had been the most impulsive creature that ever pointed a moral for headlong youth. Ever in scrapes and difficulties, but never to his dishonour, Jack fought one half his acquaintance into loving him, which the rest did of their free will; and my heart still warms involuntarily towards the wild impulsive boy, with his headstrong soul all agog for mischief.

I confess I was somewhat dismayed by the aspect of our new country; fresh from the sunny lanes of Kent, and the loved circle at home, could it be otherwise? But as for Jack, he was in raptures with everything that disquieted me. Nothing was more charmingly romantic than our hut on the bluff, and no river could equal the brown, bankless melancholy Scugog.

We did not settle down to the regulation-life of a settler all at once; we determined to sip the nectar of life on the Scugog, if, indeed, there was any of that ambrosial draught to be drained in the township. The fascination of the swift canoe kept us almost constantly on the dark mysterious river; and, in truth, there was scarcely any other outlet from our dwelling save on its waters. By day, we fished and we shot from our frail skiffs; and by night, when the moon was up, we would paddle them in her silvery wake.

I have said that a few rough settlers formed our society on the Scugog; among them were some half-breeds—a species of degenerate Indian—who had sunk from the dignity of forest-life to the servitude and buffeting of the white settlers. They were lazy, good-for-nothing fellows, except in the matter of fishing or shooting, wherein they were proficients. We found them useful in giving instruction in the canoe-life of our river-home. I preferred, for my own part, to go pretty much by myself on our water-excursions. Jack, however, had no such idea of placid enjoyment, and speedily leaving me to my aquatic reveries, he hired a hang-dog looking scoundrel named Olier to assist him in the management of his canoe. I am no great disciple of Lavater, but I never liked that half-breed. All these dregs of Indian nobility are sallow, bleared-eyed creatures, with a world of cunning, but this fellow was chief of them all for every repulsive trait. Of course, Jack ridiculed my sentiments about his new servitor; he was a match for half-a-dozen, twenty fellows like Olier, he said; and it was all right, and I was not to bother my head about *him*.

It was getting late in the fall; the Indian summer—that beautiful dream of loveliness—had restored to us in evanescent beauty the glories of a Canadian autumn. The forests were as gay with colour as a herald's tabard, and the air was yet balmy with the lingering sweetness of summer. One exquisite evening, born of one of these lovely days, I was listlessly smoking as I lay on the top of the bluff, vacantly sketching home-landscapes in the dark Scugog rolling beneath. A canoe shot round the bend of the river below the village; it was paddled by a solitary figure, who turned out to be Jack. I knew he had gone down the Scugog to fish along with Olier; but now no half-breed squatted in the opposite end of the canoe. A vague dread seized upon me as Jack, running his little bark sheer up the bank, shouldered his paddle, and marched up to me.

'How now, Jack? what have you done with your charming companion?' I inquired, disguising my conjectural fear.

'Gad! I don't know,' replied my brother, sitting down, oriental fashion, beside me.

'Not know?'

'Not a bit,' was his answer. 'How should I be acquainted with all the ins and outs of that Rosamond's Bower?' Here he indicated as much forest with his arm as would have made a few thousands of the Bower in question.

'Oh, I perceive: he's gone tracking deer, or something of that sort,' said I, immensely relieved by Jack's manner. There was a slight pause. My fears returned: I felt there was something wrong.

'Well,' said Jack, 'I'll tell you; I don't see why there need be any secret about it. You were quite right about that Olier—you were. He's a good-for-nothing fellow, and quite coolly refused this afternoon to paddle me, when I wanted to go down the river a bit further than usual.'

'And you?'

'I ran the canoe upon a yard of bank—whether an island or not, I cannot tell—gave the insolent rascal a good bastinado with the paddle, and set him ashore.'

'Good Heavens!' I exclaimed with horror, 'don't you know, Jack—haven't you sense enough to understand—that these Indian fellows are vindictive to the last degree—that they will never forget or forgive a blow?'

'Pooh!' said he, getting up quite merrily, and marching homewards, saying over his shoulder: 'Oh, you don't bother yourself! Olier will be down on his marrow-bones to-morrow—see if he isn't. Besides, I owe him half a dollar.'

To-morrow came, unfruitful with the half-breed's submission. The story got abroad amongst the huts, and the old settlers, who knew their man, shook their heads ominously, and boded no good to my impulsive brother. However, two days passed harmlessly, during which Jack and I fished and shot together. Olier had not reappeared, and I began to breathe more freely. Doubtless, he had left the district. He was an unsettled fellow at anyrate, and had no property or tie in the village to tempt his stay.

Twenty miles below the village, the dark Scugog whitens into rapids, and is hurled with gigantic power over a lofty precipice. I had often wished to see the falls, but it had been hitherto impossible to accomplish the distance by my single arm. At last my wish was to be gratified. A shooting-party was made up by some of the villagers, and, at my urgent request, I was included. The arrangement was to spend a night at the falls, camping out on the bank, and return the following day. Instead of canoes, we were to sail down in a large flat-bottomed boat, termed, in Canadian parlance, a scow. Strange to say, Jack did not care about going, saying that he would enjoy himself more in his own canoe; and, as we were already crowded for room, we did not press him to change his resolution.

Our expedition had little in it noteworthy. The river for over twenty miles' sail remained the same monotonous, melancholy Scugog, never varying for the space of a hand. Not a vestige of clearance was there between our village and the falls, not a glimpse of bank. The trees lined the waters like a wall, and, save the wild game, no one ever tried to force a way through their close-knit ranks, woofed at the base by a tangle of unwholesome verdure. This aspect I had stern reason for remembering. The only bright thing was the patch of cloudless blue sky seen at the extremity of this long reach of wood and water. Over all brooded the intensest silence. No bird trilled us a single song: all was still, save for the lugubrious woodpecker, which, perched on a rotting tree, hammered its hollow sides with its beak. Tap, tap, tap!—it was a most unearthly sound.

We had seen the stupendous falls in their lonely majesty, and were steering homewards in our scow. As we neared the village again, distant only some five or six miles, the sun was sinking behind the tree-horizon. A slight blue haze bathed the long reaches of the river with ineffable softness and beauty. We voyaged on a liquid field of cloth of gold. But ever and again, marring my intense perception of its loveliness, came the ghastly tap, tap, tap of the woodpecker. I could not resist a chilly sensation of horror as I listened to the measured cadence, echoing through the solitude. It sounded like a coffin-maker hammering at his dismal task. A relief suggested itself. Some of my companions were French Canadians, and the evening before had cheered our bivouac with some gay *refrains* of sunny France. I asked them for a stave; but I said nothing about the woodpecker, whose note I wished them to drown. A strong chorus soon vanquished the bird of ill omen, and rang up the vaulted river. I recollect the strain well; it was a favourite *voyageurs'* ditty, sung to the dash of the oar, and began:

Mon joli canot blanc,
Ramez, ramez, ramez.

Suddenly, the song lulled, and again I shuddered as I heard the reverberating tap, tap of my ominous bird aloft on a spectral fir. My companions had ceased rowing, too, and called my attention to a canoe, which was floating down the river a few yards ahead of us. They thought it was a break-loose, and stood by to strike a boat-hook into it, with the prospect of a reward from the owner up at the village. It soon dropped down to us, and came, like the note of that ghostly woodpecker, tapping against our skiff. There was a stifled cry of horror from the settler at the bow; and as we crowded forward to see what was the matter, another cried out the awful tale of blood: 'Here, young fellow, see your brother—stalked by Olier, as sure's there's death in a rifle-bullet!'

It was an awful end! My poor brother lay bent over his idle paddle in the canoe, weltering in his heart's blood. An avenging bullet had passed through his heart. Stalked by Olier! Fiendish Indian, that was thy work, and my brother's blood rested on thy head. I shall not now detail the agonies of that Indian summer. Through all my grief ran the thought of an exterminating vengeance. Vengeance? nay, scant justice. I sought what has been law since the world began—blood for blood. It was vain in those early times of a judicial system in Canada, to seek for a rigorous pursuit from the dispensers of legal justice; the criminal executive might be willing, but their arm was weak. Retribution, in the trackless wild of wood and water where I dwelt, could proceed only from my own steady purpose and solitary endeavour.

I could depend for but small aid on the settlers. Some of them, indeed, cursed the foul murder in no stinted speech; but others, again, imputed little crime to the blood-stained redskin, and even went so far as to justify his sneaking code of vengeance. Olier had left the district, but a certain instinct told me he would ere long come back again. Likely enough, he would suppose I could not long remain in a place to which such hateful memories clung, and that he might then safely venture back. I waited my time. Safe he was in the tangled thicket; but, to the end, I knew that no covert under heaven would preserve him harmless from my wrath.

Winter set in, hard, and white, and cold. The river Scugog was a level road of ice; the trees were choked up with snow, and on each side of the ice-bound river, the forests towered like massive cliffs of chalky rock. No path could now be forced into the recesses of the forest below our village. Scarcely had winter settled down for his undisturbed reign, than I heard whisperings that the villain half-breed was again hovering on the outskirts of the settlement. It was told me that he was living in a kind of wigwam above the village, and also that he had more than once come to the very dwellings of the settlers by night, to visit his friends, and obtain various articles for his camp. I knew it would be vain to attempt to track him to his wigwam, or, at all events, to surprise him; his wood-craft was much too deep to admit of such a possibility. But a strange, wild joy trembled through my being, when I heard he came by night to the village. A terrible scheme of vengeance swept across my soul; and I felt, no matter how fiendish the spirit, that the doom of the half-breed was fixed, and that I was to be his unrelenting executioner.

I have said that the river, below our settlement, was bordered by an impenetrable forest, without symptom of clearing or the abode of man. The drifted snow, lying in deep masses on each side of the river, up even to the tops of the trees, rendered this impenetrability still more appalling and stubborn. The forest which lined the ice-bound Scugog supported a solid wall of frozen snow. For twenty miles, the river with its wooded banks was nothing more or less than a funnel of ice and snow.

Night after night, I lay concealed at the bluff, awaiting the murderer; I was armed with pistols, and wore skates. Skating was an amusement which I had excelled in when a schoolboy, and facility in the art was of the last importance to my scheme of retribution. At length he came. It was an exquisite night; the white expanse around sparkled in the sheen of a young Canadian moon, which sailed calmly through a cloudless sky. I could have shot the villain as he skated by me within fifty yards, but I would not risk the chance, and besides my vengeance cried for a sterner fate than death by the pistol. No sooner was he past my hiding-place, than, with a shout of exultation, I started on his track. Olier swerved a moment, to see who his pursuer was, then, quick as lightning, tried to double up the river again. But I had anticipated this, and with a cocked pistol in either hand, I barred his passage. With a curse, he turned, and sped swiftly down the ice.

And now the race for life began. Mile after mile we swept along in silence. An awful portentous silence it was, through which nothing broke save the hollow boom of the swift steel cutting its way over the imprisoned Scugog. The moon lit me nobly to my vengeance. He could not escape me, for I found with savage glee that I was a match for the swift-footed Indian. Olier soon became aware of this too, for, now and again, he would skate close to the woods, looking in vain for an aperture. But no; there was but one outlet from this walled-in river; and that was *over the falls!*

Faster and faster yet we skated towards the cataract. It could not be far off. I pictured to myself what Olier's thoughts might be. Did he know whither he was hastening? or had that awful light yet to flash on his guilty mind? The half-breed made answer to my thought. I saw him in the pale shimmer start convulsively, and throw his arms in the air; but he dared not stop, and on he darted again with a yell of despair, which echoed weird-like up the frozen channel. Another sound came to my ear, and I knew what had caused that cry of agony to burst from Olier; it was the dull thunder of the falls! We were nearing them fast. Still the walls of snow shut in my victim, and every moment lessened his frail hopes of escape. One chance was left him—to distance me, and hide somewhere in the snow from my scrutiny. Vain hope, the wings of the bird could scarce have saved him!

Hoarser and louder grew the noise of the waters. If I thanked the Almighty in frantic prayer that the murderer was delivered into my hand, I humbly trust that it is forgiven me now. From the time I had first started on Olier's track, we had maintained exactly the same distance between us—perhaps about a hundred or a hundred and fifty yards. I still grasped my loaded pistols, ready for any stratagem on the part of the murderer.

And now the crash of the falls came loud and ominous on the ear. Another five minutes would decide the hunt. Suddenly, Olier turned and stood at bay. He was not armed; I had felt certain of that all along, for otherwise he would have measured strength with me before. Without bating my pace, I skated down upon him, holding a levelled pistol in each hand. Still, my purpose was as fixed as ever only to shoot the villain as a last resource. When I was within twenty yards of him, the coward faltered, and again turned swiftly down the river. With a yelling laugh I pursued him, pressing still more hotly on his track.

Deafening was the roar of the cataract; high into the pale sky ascended the mist of its spray, through which the splintered lines of the moonlight darted in rainbow-tinted beauty. I could see directly in front the jagged line of the ice, where it was broken by the rapids immediately above the cataract, and beyond I could trace the dark volume of the Scugog, as it emerged from its prison of snow and ice. For an instant the half-breed turned his face towards me, as I pressed with concentrated hate on his footsteps; never shall I forget the horrible despair that distorted the villain's features. It was a mercy that the sullen roar of the falls drowned his curses—I knew he was shrieking curses on me—for they would have haunted me in after-years.

With the courage which is begotten of the darkest despair, he dashed on to the brink of the rapids, and the next moment I was alone on the ice! I gazed with stern joy on the dark flood which had seized in its resistless hands the shedder of blood, and was hurrying him over the falls. For a moment, I thought I could perceive the murderer struggling in the eddies; but the illusion, if it was one, could live only for an instant. The cataract was within pistol-shot, and as I turned up the dreary wilderness of ice and snow, I knew that the doom of the guilty skater had been fulfilled.

INSIDE OUR BANK.

PRECISELY at nine A.M. our old porter opens the bank-door, gives the counter a finishing sweep with his duster, and makes his exit, until four in the afternoon, when he punctually reappears to close up, and carry the cash-boxes into the safe for the night. The manager has had the letters taken up to him at eight by one of the juniors, so that he may run them over comfortably at breakfast, and now bringing them down with him, prepares to dispose of their contents. These letters contain chiefly notes of the bank, or cheques drawn on it by clients, which have been remitted to a distance, and are now sent in for payment.

'How is Jenkins's account?' is his first question to the ledger-keeper. 'Is this cheque for L.500 provided for?'

'He has only L.250 at his credit, sir.'

'Very well; I must drop him a note to provide.

Tell the cashiers to pay nothing on his account until he has funds to meet his cheques. I see Jones is drawing on us pretty largely too; you may let him have an advance of a couple of hundreds; not more.'

'Very well, sir;' and so through the pile of letters the manager goes, until the last is despatched. He then passes them to the different departments, where they are regularly entered in the books of the bank.

By this time it is ten o'clock, the tellers are all at their posts, and customers begin to drop in. Here comes our 'Old Indian,' a man who has honourably acquitted himself as a military man, and one whom every one likes, but who has got into difficulties, which, perhaps, he feels more galling than he ever did the fire of an enemy. Without any preliminaries, he, soldier-like, comes to the point at once.

'I wish to pay the interest on that bill of mine you hold, and to renew it for three months longer.'

'Very good, sir. I will find the bill.'

The teller now goes ostensibly for the document, but in reality to consult the manager's wishes on the subject.

'Mr Brookes has called to renew his note; shall I do so?'

'Well, I suppose we must. You know we have a little security for it, and as he means to pay off gradually, we must try to oblige him.'

Having found the bill, the teller again goes to his desk, and draws out the new one, which the old gentleman signs, pays the interest on the first, and with a stiff good-morning, takes his leave. We all feel for him, but, it must be confessed, sometimes wonder, with all credit to his good intentions, whether he ever will do much more than renew his bills.

Here comes somebody of rather a different character, in the shape of an Irish pig-jobber, a stranger to us. He lays his great whip on the counter, takes off an apology for a hat, and then fumbling in the recesses of his dirty garments, lugs out a bundle of very nasty-looking notes.

'Could ye give me Bank of England for them, sur?' he asks in his most insinuating manner.

'We never change notes to strangers.'

'Why, they 're good, ain't they?'

'Yes, doubtless; but we don't change notes of another bank.'

'Well, sur, supposing I paid ye a little charges now, would ye do it for me?'

'Do you know any one in the town? If you can find any one known to us, who will write his name on the back of them, we might do it, perhaps.'

'Yes, sure, sur, there's Mr Murphy, the pork-butcher, sur.'

'Well, he will do.'

In due time he reappears with his friend Murphy, and with much satisfaction pockets the clean Bank of England notes, which are doubtless more useful in his dealings here than he finds the Irish ones to be. After paying his charges, as he calls them, the warm heart of a son of Erin exhibits itself: 'Thank ye, sur,' and, 'By jabbers, if ye 'll come out wid me, I 'll stand trate for brandy!'

The bank is now full, and the click of the sovereigns as they are rapidly counted alternates with the dash of the scales into which they are as rapidly shovelled, for the purpose of being weighed. In the English banks, where gold forms a large circulating medium, these scales are of great service to a cashier; double counting of his gold is thereby avoided, and in the matter of accuracy, they are more reliable, for *he* may be wrong, but his weights can never allow the scales to be so. All the tellers seem in a hurry, yet there is no confusion; everything goes on in an orderly and systematic manner. In very large banks, each of the tellers has certain letters affixed to his desk—A to D, for instance—so that all the customers whose names begin with any of those letters going at once to him only, prevents any inconvenient crowding around one particular teller, while such an arrangement also gives to each of them a fair proportion of work.

Who can this little man be who now comes forward, thumping down on the counter those immense bags of silver, and who has a man behind him bringing more? This is old Levy, who collects silver for the bank, when hard pressed for that useful part of the currency. How he gets it all, or where, nobody cares to know; there it is. Hard work he must have, and not very great pay, for he receives only half a crown for every hundred pounds of silver he brings. But a very useful appendage to the bank is Mr Levy nevertheless. There goes the messenger off to some branch with a remittance, which probably has just been asked for by letter. There seems nothing very particular about him, and yet his non-arrival at the branch to-day would place the respectable manager there in a very uncomfortable dilemma. It is curious how little bother is made in sending him off. The manager quietly walks up to him and says laconically: 'Ten thousand pounds in notes to go to Overdun Branch by next train; you have twenty minutes.' The messenger sends out for a cab, stuffs the little bundle of notes into an inside breast-pocket, and away he goes as unconcernedly as if he hadn't a penny about him. Here comes the little telegraph lad, elbowing his way up to the teller, and pitching his missive imperiously across to him, as if he knew that his business was of primary consequence, and would be first attended to; and he is right. The dispatch is opened by the manager, and is from our London bankers, where all our bills are payable; and he thus reads: 'Your customer, Robert Banks's bill for L.300 to Hayes & Co., is presented for payment; we have no advice from you to pay, shall we do so?'

'Very stupid of Banks!' mutters the manager; but on referring to his account, he finds plenty of funds to meet it; so our careless friend is sent for, to give the necessary cheque and sanction for correcting his oversight. He comes in very hot, makes all kinds of apologies, and then another little missive is sent to the Telegraph Office, addressed to our agents; it contains only the word 'Pay,' accompanied, however, by a private cipher, known only to the 'confidentials' in both establishments, and without which it would not be taken notice of in London. Such a precautionary measure is necessary to prevent fraud, as it would be very easy for any one to send some forged message; and with a confederate in London to receive the money, they might be far enough off before either their absence or the fraud was discovered.

So much for the more public part of a banking establishment. Let us now have a look at some of its more private features; let us enter what is technically known as 'the sweating parlour,' so called because in it some of the refractory clients of the bank meet its generally affable manager, who, with a stony severity of countenance, informs them solemnly of their long standing arrears of loan, which cannot be held over any longer, and must, if not paid up by a certain time, be handed over to the bank's solicitor for the necessary proceedings in the matter. Sometimes honest men are thus 'sweated,' for general laws will bear hard at times on individual cases; but it is not that class which is thus rigorously dealt with; by far the greater portion are those who either strive, with small capital, to drive a larger trade than it warrants, which they have no right to do, or those who will not pay what they might do towards the reduction of their debt.

The board-room is, however, the grand centre around which the whole mechanism of the bank revolves. There, in solemn assembly sit, once a week, that august body reverently spoken of as 'the directors;' there all the overdrawn accounts are gone over and commented upon; instructions are given for further advance or reduced balances; all the bills on hand, and the character of their acceptors, are regularly examined and criticised; grave deliberations are held as to the best means of investing any surplus funds; and last, but not least, to those immediately concerned, the question of salaries is there gone into, and duly disposed of. Very rarely, indeed, is a joke heard, or a pun perpetrated in this retreat, sacred to business alone; but should such an event ever occur, it is doubtless some piece of dry wit comprehensible only by financiers. The directors never die—that is to say, they never die out. So soon as a vacancy takes place, it is immediately filled, generally by the largest shareholder, if possessed of a reasonable amount of capacity for such a position.

The bank's safe, upon the security of which, both from fire and burglars, so much depends, is worth some notice. The best safes consist of one large stone room enclosing three different compartments. The entrance to the room itself is first by a strong iron gate, behind which stands the door, formed of massive iron plates, and so constructed that, on being pushed open, it rings a bell placed in the bedroom of the manager. Passing through this door, we stand in the first division of the safe, where all the books are kept at night. At the further end of this room is another iron door, stronger than the first, which opens into the compartment containing all the money in the hands of the bank. Around us lie bags of gold, silver, and boxes containing notes, while in the centre stands one of Milner's patent safes, full of bills and other securities, which, in large banks, amount to millions. Every precaution is taken which ingenuity can furnish to protect the property committed to *safe* keeping; and rarely, indeed, is such a cash-box broken open. One rather troublesome consequence is, that families leaving home send to the banker rather more plate-chests than he can always conveniently accommodate.

ODDITIES IN MUSIC.

There may be oddities even in music, as the reader shall forthwith see.

A century or two ago, an enormous amount of time and trouble was expended in making machines which should 'discourse sweet sounds.' It is impossible not to admit that, musically considered, this was a great waste of ingenuity; but it is equally impossible not to admire the ingenuity itself. Take, as an example, M. Vaucanson's *flute-player*, exhibited at Paris rather more than a century ago. This was a figure of a man, about five feet and a half high, seated on a small pedestal. Within the pedestal and the figure was an extremely complicated mass of cranks, wheels, levers, pipes, and bellows. A flute was held by the two hands of the automaton; wind was blown into the instrument through the imitative mouth; the lips modified the passage of the wind; the fingers played upon the holes and keys; and the tones were emitted in proper pitch, order, and duration to form a melody. The flute had a full scale of three octaves. It was a *bonâ-fide* exhibition; no person was concealed within the apparatus; all the effects were fairly produced by automatic mechanism, in a way that excited as much admiration among scientific men as among musicians. A second example of the same kind was Vaucanson's *pipe and tabour player*. This was a figure dressed as a peasant, which could play no less than twenty dance-tunes on a pipe and tabour. The pipe was a kind of flageolet with three holes, which could be played with one hand; the tabour was a sort of tambourine, struck with a stick. The great skill of Vaucanson was here shewn in this particular: the pipe having only three finger-holes, the variety of notes to form a tune could only be produced by modifying the force with which the wind was propelled into the instrument—a necessity which entailed great nicety and complexity in the mechanism. A third example was Maillardet's *pianoforte-player*, exhibited about half a century ago. This was a female figure, seated at a pianoforte. By mechanism alone, this figure was able to play eighteen tunes. In one point, the playing differed from ordinary playing: the white keys only were pressed by the fingers; the black keys, for flats and sharps, were worked by foot-pedals. When once wound up, the figure would continue playing for an hour. But the lady's attractions are not yet all summed up. We are told that 'all her movements were elegant, graceful, and almost lifelike; before beginning a tune, she made a gentle inclination with her head to the auditors; her bosom heaved, and her eyes followed the motion of her fingers over the finger-board.' A fourth example was Maelzel's *trumpeter*, constructed by the inventor of the 'metronome,' or time-beating pendulum. The automaton figure was that of an Austrian trumpeter of dragoons. On being pressed on the shoulder, it played the Austrian cavalry-march, a march by Weigl, and the various signals for army-manœuvres. The same figure, when differently dressed, became a French trumpeter of the Guard, and played the French cavalry-march, the manœuvre signals, a march by Dussek, and an allegro by Pleyel. The figure was wound up for playing by a key on the hip. The trumpet-tones were said to be very perfect and agreeable.

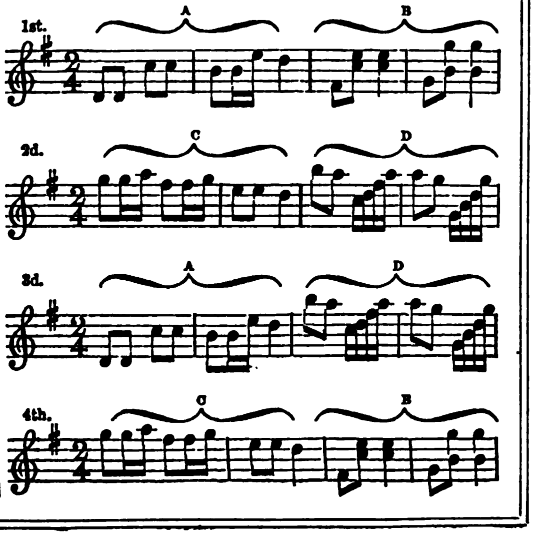
All the instruments above described derived their oddity from the attempt to imitate the action and movements of living performers. There is another and larger class, however, in which, without this degree of ambition, there is still an endeavour made to produce music by turning a handle. The *barrel-organ*, the street-nuisance against which the editor of the *Times* has been so often called upon to hurl his thunder, is the type of this class. In these organs there is a wooden barrel or cylinder, studded thickly with brass or copper pins ranged in determinate order. As the barrel rotates, the pins lift up certain levers, which open certain pipes for the admission of a current of air. If the pins were not fixed in the barrel in a predetermined order, they would open the pipes indiscriminately, and produce a jargon of sounds; if the pipes were not attuned to the regular series of tones and semitones, the result would be equally discordant; but when the pipes are properly attuned, and the pins inserted in the barrel according to an arrangement depending on the actual tune to be played, then that particular tune can be produced as long as the 'grinder' has patience to turn the handle. By a small adjustment of the mechanism, the same barrel can be made to open the pipes for many different tunes in succession. Now, on this basis several other instruments have been invented, the chief of which was the *Apollonicon*. This once-celebrated instrument was like a church-organ in its general character, and could be played on by keys in the ordinary way; but it had two peculiar additions. In the first place, it had many 'stops' or sets of pipes, to imitate several musical instruments; and, in the next place, it had a barrel which, when kept rotating, rendered the use of the finger-keys unnecessary. There were altogether nineteen hundred pipes, comprising forty-five 'stops' or qualities of tone, and giving all the tones and semitones in a scale of amazing extent. The instrument was five years in building, and cost ten thousand pounds. Thirty or forty years ago, the musical connoisseurs of the metropolis were wont to flock to the organ-building rooms of Messrs Flight and Robson, in St Martin's Lane, to hear a blind organist draw out the qualities of the instrument as a church-organ, but more especially to hear it play by automatic action such elaborate pieces as the overtures to *Zauberflöte*, *Anacreon*, *Figaro*, and *Der Freischutz*. The Apollonicon was the first and only member of this gigantic class of automatic instruments. It advanced in age; it became rheumatic in its joints and asthmatic in its wind; it disappeared from the public gaze, and being no longer worthy of the space it occupied, its existence was finally extinguished. A much more humble invention, Mr Dawson's *Autophon*, was introduced a few years ago. It is not a musical instrument in itself, but an adjunct to a barrel-organ, by which the organ can be made to play an unlimited number of tunes, instead of a small and definite number. Round holes to represent the notes of a tune are made in card-board—one card to each tune; and when one of these cards is placed within the instrument, and a handle turned, the pipes are made to sound, but only according to the perforations. The principle bears a good deal of resemblance to that of the Jacquard apparatus in some varieties of loom for weaving. The intention of the inventor was, in part, to render barrel-organs more suitable in small chapels, where the expense of a keyed organ could not be borne; but the recent inventions of the seraphine and harmonium have probably superseded it.

Many musical oddities occasionally start up into notice, and die a quiet (or unquiet) death soon afterwards; such as the *piano-violin*, which so amused the visitors to the United States department of the Great Exhibition eight years ago. In this contrivance, which must really have called for a large amount of ingenuity, a lady played the piano, the piano played a violin, and the two together produced such sounds as we never wish to hear again. The musical jury tried hard to praise it, but could not get beyond 'honourable mention.'

One class of contrivances on which inventors have expended a large amount of ingenuity is that which includes *speaking-machines*, allied to music only in so far as concerns the emission of audible sounds. Many years ago, M. Kempelen, of Hungary, constructed an automaton which could speak a few words, or rather, could utter sounds which resembled words. Professor Wheatstone and Professor Willis have since taken up the subject in a scientific form—not as a mere toy, but to ascertain how far the use of artificial mechanism could imitate the action of the larynx, tongue, palate, lips, &c., in producing articulate sounds.

We may now notice two oddities, in which the arithmetical process of 'permutation' is brought into requisition to do that which ordinary mortals believe can only be done by a mental process. The first is not musical, but we advert to it because it will help to illustrate the second. About twelve or fifteen years ago, one Mr Clark startled the world with an announcement that he had invented, under the name of the *Eureka*, a poetry-making machine. This apparatus professed to be nothing less than an automaton Latin versifier. All inspired poets were invited to lighten their labours by merely putting a few words into a box, turning a handle, and grinding out a Latin hexameter ready made. The Eureka, as a machine, resembled a small bdreau book-case, on the front of which, through an aperture, the lines or verses appeared in succession as they were composed. The interior mechanism was not very clearly described in the public journals at the time; but it appears to have comprised a power of substitution, whereby certain letters or words could be made to supply the places of certain others having the same character in reference to the hexameter and its requirements. The variety of changes was considerable, and the mechanical construction of the lines ingenious; but the poetry was of course of a very small order.

The second example of these odd contrivances, involving arithmetical substitution, is Mr Van Noorden's curious *Polyharmonicon*—not a musical automaton, nor a speaking-machine, nor a verse-making machine, but a polka-composing apparatus. The Greek language has been very busily searched in devising names for new musical contrivances; but in this case the appellation is rather better than usual; for the invention does really set forth 'many harmonies' or 'many tunes,' as the name seems to import. It is an application of school-boy 'permutation' to young-lady 'polkas.' Every boy with a slate knows that a number of figures can be arranged in many different ways, so as to produce almost endless combinations; every card-player knows that the number of different combinations of cards which may chance to fall to his hand is so great, that the most inveterate whist-player never held exactly the same hand twice, although it is just possible. So much for the *permutation*—now for the *polka*. Most persons familiar with this class of music must have observed that all polka-tunes have the same general type. Each bar contains two crotchets or their equivalents; each two consecutive bars form a phrase; each part or strain of the tune contains four phrases or eight bars; and, all throughout, the accented notes are such as to suit the 'one-two-three-four' of the step. Now, Mr Van Noorden appears to have propounded to himself this question: 'If polka-tunes have the same general constructive character, might we not, by permutation, make the same bar, or the same two bars of music, do duty in many different polka-tunes?' The answer was in the affirmative; and hence the production of the Polyharmonicon. Twelve polka-tunes were composed by him, each complete in itself, and each consisting of sixteen bars, in two parts of eight bars each. But although complete in themselves, all the tunes were composed with ulterior relations to each other. The first phrase or couplet of bars of any one tune might be followed by the second phrase of *any one of the twelve tunes*, without inconsistency in style or general character; the third phrase might, in like manner, be selected from among any one of the twelve tunes; and so on. The result is thus almost endless; for there may be 12 times 12 times 12 &c. varieties of arrangement. Let us endeavour to illustrate this in the simplest possible way—by selecting only two tunes, only four bars or two phrases of each tune, and only the treble part of the harmony, leaving out the bass:



Here, four portions or phrases, which we have lettered A, B, C, D, although belonging to two polka tunes, may equally well serve as the beginnings of four such tunes, by the mode of rearrangement or substitution indicated. If we increase the number of tunes selected, and the number of bars to each tune, the varieties rapidly augment.

The mechanical arrangements for realising the idea are very simple. All the tunes are printed on stiff card-board, two bars or one phrase on each card. Each card has at the top a number and a letter; the number to denote the tune to which it belongs, and the letter to denote the position of the bars in the tune. The music is harmonised into treble and bass, or for a pianoforte or similar instrument. A flat box is provided, with eight cells, each cell filled with twelve varieties of some one letter—A for the beginning of the tunes, H for the endings, and the intermediate letters for the intermediate bars. The 'ringing of the changes' is effected by selecting any one of the twelve cards *ad libitum*, from each cell. The case forms a sort of music-book, when set nearly upright. There is a *da capo* at the end of each tune, denoting that the first strain is to be repeated; and thus, although there are only sixteen bars printed, the tune consists virtually of twenty-four. The tunes all begin in the key of G (one sharp), then modulate into D (two sharps) at the second strain, and then return to the original key after the *da capo*. The principle once admitted, it may be presented in various forms to suit different tastes. For instance—some of the sets, at a cheaper rate, contain only eight cards in each cell, instead of twelve; some are harmonised for four hands, or two players on one pianoforte; and in some sets the tunes composed are waltzes instead of polkas. Now comes the question, *Cui bono?*—what is the use of all this? If Mr Van Noorden advertised his polyharmonicon as a great discovery, an important aid to musical science, a little strict criticism might be needed; but he modestly designates his patented or copyright invention a 'Musical Game;' and, as such, it merits the notice, not only of the children for whom it is intended, but of 'children of larger growth.' There is something instructive in it concerning the melody of successive tones, and the harmony of simultaneous tones; there is something in it curiously illustrative of what may be called the mechanical construction of dance-music, in which *rhythm* is a more important element than melody; and, though the 'many thousands' of polka tunes may not be very brilliant, they are ingenious, and sufficient for the end in view—to set the feet going.

MY BORE.

If one could ever have obtained of the subject of this paper what architects call a 'front elevation,' he would have been a tall man; but he stooped so that he never presented more than a foreshortened view of himself, and consequently always looking much shorter than he really was, had often the injustice done him of being called 'a little old man.' He was very slight and thin, and had a way of keeping his elbows close into his sides, which made him appear additionally narrow, and suggested the idea of his arms branching from his ribs rather than his shoulders. His head was sunk in such a manner that his hat rested on the neck of his coat, and his ears on his shirt collars. His coat was olive-green, wearing to a lighter hue about the seams, with flap-pockets on the hips, and two little closely-connected buttons high up in the back between the shoulder-blades, defining what the tailor who designed the garment regarded as its waist. His long thin fingers manifested themselves straggling out in a star-fishy sort of way, and perpetually cased in thick woollen gloves, rounded at the ends. He wore close-fitting black trousers, and whity-brown gaiters, which came half-way down over boots so large in size and bossy in divers places as to put beyond question that he suffered from corns. He carried an old and heavy silk umbrella, much torn and fretted by use, and with the whalebone skeleton often rising to the surface in a ghostly manner. He was bald, with a forehead so smoothly sallow, it might have been made of yellow deal, highly varnished. His bushy white eyebrows, springing upwards, made together a sort of Gothic arch over his glassy pale-blue eyes, and prolonged, projecting, pear-shaped nose. His complexion was pale and faded, with a purple ingrain appearing here and there, especially about the nose, the cheek-bones, and the chin. He wore heavy spectacles, with silver or plated metal frames; and, in addition to these, when reading or writing, used tortoise-shell framed double eye-glasses, the combination imparting a certain barbaric pomp to his nose, which was singularly striking. He spoke in a measured, dry, bit-by-bit sort of way, as though each word had to be rasped like a French roll before it was brought out. He never hurried his speech, but always coolly went on, detaching sentence after sentence, with many pauses, to see that his words had thoroughly entered into you, as though he were dropping stones into a well, and waited till he heard one had reached the bottom before he sent another after it. But yet in his dry, chippy style he was civil, and even old-gentlemanly; and though, if you saw him slowly sliding about the streets, you would deem him decidedly eccentric in effect, you would none the less hasten to acknowledge that he was unquestionably respectable. And he was so—a peculiarity essential, as Sir Walter Scott remarked, to all bores; for otherwise they would have no influence over you to admit of their assuming the character.

In my case, the bore had an additional *purchase*. 'Sir,' he would say, with a certain offended tone mingling with the discordant notes of his grating voice, slightly drawing himself out of his semicircular curve into a nearer approach to a straight line, and spreading out his sprawling fingers in their woollen casing, about two feet six inches from the ground—'Sir—my dear sir—I knew your father when he was *so* high.'

It was his only special claim—his sole argument—and it was adduced with so convinced an air of its sufficiency, that it really almost was convincing; the privilege of having known my deceased parent when he was just two feet six inches in height seemed to be adequate authority for pursuing me through life. And I had yielded to this claim; I had acquiesced in its adequacy—made liberal outlay on the strength of it; and the man who had known my father when he was '*so* high' steadily availed himself of my weakness.

Knocks at doors are to the ear what handwriting is to the eyes. His was recognisable at once. It was not the single bang of the parcel, nor the double of the postman, nor the treble of the friend, nor the long addition sum, the appogiatura-ed fantasia of the footman; but a compound of these, with something of the measured accents of the man, and much of the doubt, and discomfort, and mystery attaching to his mission. Admittance gained, there was always much scuttering on the door-mat, as he assiduously wiped his boots. He always appeared to contemplate a prolonged visit. I could hear his sharp dry cough, as he cleared his voice to prepare himself, as it seemed, lest argument or expostulation should be required of him. If I was in, but engaged, he would take a seat, and wait; if I was out, he would take a seat, and wait; if I could not see him; if I could not possibly see him; if I did not know when I should be disengaged;

if I was out, and it was quite uncertain when I should be in; if I was not expected home for hours—it was all the same to him, he would take a seat, and wait. I have often thought slightingly of Patience on a monument smiling at Grief, in comparison with 'my bore' taking a seat and waiting on my hall-chair.

But it was not only pecuniary help he claimed; he wanted time also; he wanted conversation, discussion—to narrate to me a whole history. For hour after hour he would go on drawing out his sharp, curt, macadamised sentences. Of course, he had a grievance—we all have grievances; but my bore was just the man to have a grievance which was his own, his life, bone of his bone; and if you knew and accepted him, you knew and accepted it, for they were inseparable. He had it always with him, to air and ventilate, and produce and demonstrate. When he had obtained me all to himself, his prisoner for hours—when he had got me before him a compulsory listener, and had securely planted himself *between me and the door*, then to produce the grievance wholly, to look at it from all sorts of points of view, to analyse it in every way, to subject it to an endless variety of tests, to put this in the crucible, and that in the scales, to break it up into innumerable little pieces, and then put it together again deliberately after the manner of a puzzle—all this to him was enjoyment, no matter what it was to me. He glowed with excitement as he went on showering about his sharp chips of words like so many hailstones, and waving about from the elbow his thin tight arms and their woollen star-fish terminations; and when the listener was nearly prostrate from exhaustion, he would wake him up with a more than ordinarily cruel lash—an application for money!

I make no scruple of avowing that I never clearly understood the grievance. The reader will perhaps the more readily pardon my dulness in this particular when I state that it was in some way founded upon, or connected with, a Chancery suit—a wonderful Chancery suit, which had been going on no one knew how long, and in which the hopes, and fears, and fortunes of I am afraid to say how many people were in some way centered and bound up.

His name was Bunker—James Bunker, and he had been a wine-merchant in Pall Mall. He was not a wine-merchant now, and he lived over an oil-and-pickle shop in Fetter Lane. At what time he relinquished business I am unable to state. For years he had been a bore, living over the pickle-shop. He had bored my father for a long course of years, and on his decease, he had affectionately transferred his interest to me, and bored me with a persistence which did credit to his strength of mind. I was quite prepared to believe that at my demise my little ones would be honoured with equally punctual attentions, and that he would be in fact a sort of heir-loom bore handed down from sire to son through several generations of my family; for though there were certain symptoms of age about him, these were not in any way to be confounded with decay.

The link which bound him to the great suit of Joss *versus* Gargle was never, to my mind, clear in its drawing; but it was evident that through it there was a chance of benefit of some sort eventually accruing to him. Who Joss was, or who Gargle was, or why, for a long course of years, they were made to appear in such endless antagonism, I cannot tell. My belief is, that they were both dead long before the period of which I am writing; so it avails not to count them as firm places upon which to take a stand and survey the slough around. We must probe about as with an *Alpenstock* for where may be secure footing, and where may be hidden *crevasses*. It is undoubted that there was a 'fund in court.' I suppose there never was a Chancery suit without one; and it was of course for some slice of this the whole parties to the suit were striving, like school-boys round a cake. There was an estate called the Calm Retreat, in the island of St Kitts, which was always being valued and re-valued, and about the worth of which the most fluctuating opinions were entertained. There was also a certain large sum of money which had been, or ought to have been, paid by the commissioners for the abolition of the slave-trade, in the way of compensation for the manumission of the slaves on the estate. There was a testator, and, his trustees and executors, some of whom would act, and some would not. There were numberless charges upon the estate, and a fierce struggle among the mortgagees as to who held the first and who the last incumbrances. There were trustees, also, of the testator's marriage-settlement, charged to pay an annuity to his widow; and intrusted with separate provisions for the behoof of the children of the marriage, who were thus brought in and made parties. Then, the widow had married the overseer of the estate, and so the suit was recruited by more trustees and a fresh family. Then a doubt had arisen as to the formality of the testator's marriage, and all his next of kin came in as claimants. Next, the consignees of the produce of the estate started some extraordinary demand to be regarded as partners of the testator, and part-owners of the Calm Retreat. Some one had gone mad, and committees of the lunatic had to be appointed, and accounts taken of his revenues and properties. Some one else had gone bankrupt, and this had added a fine shoal of fresh parties to the suit. There were a variety of assignees, and trustees, and creditors of all kinds, secured and unsecured, specialty and simple contract. Then there was an army of infants, who appeared by their next friends, and whose interests the court pertinaciously protected. Then the infants grew up, the males rushing into debts, and adding more claimants upon the fund; and the females marrying, and annexing husbands and trustees, and in due time more infants and next friends. There was some one always paying large sums of money for premiums on policies of insurance on the life of some one else, and great dilemma as to where the money was to be got to pay these premiums, and great doubt as to whether any one was really entitled to receive the amount of the policies when the assured's life dropped. Of course, some of the parties to the suit had been committed for contempt, and it was supposed that a few had died in the King's Bench prison, unable to purge themselves of their sins in that respect. Some of the parties had disappeared altogether, and though they were advertised for, and all sorts of officers of the court sent in search of them, still they never turned up, and it was conjectured that they were hiding away in different far quarters of the globe, expressly to be out of the reach of Joss *versus* Gargle. Then everything had to be doubted and proved, and everybody questioned and derided the claim of everybody else. There were doubts about births, about marriages, about deaths. Each term produced a fresh crop of evidence, and a new harvest of difficulties, for, to do it justice, it was not a standing-still suit; it was of busy, active habits; only the longer it lived, and the further it went on, the more it seemed to be going utterly out of the way of any practicable termination. It had outlived I do not know how many chancellors. The original bill was generally believed to bear date very early in the present century. The shuttlecock was first struck by the then Master of the Rolls, and had since then been most creditably kept up by his successors and by the chancellors for the time being. It was heard and re-heard, argued and argued again; it was now referred to this Master, now to that, then to the other; evidence was required, and affidavits were made, and witnesses were examined upon interrogatories, and commissions to take evidence in all parts of the civilised globe were issued. Then states of facts were brought in to the Master's office, pursued by counter-states of facts, and accounts were taken and schedules sworn to, and every document had to be draft-copied, and fair-copied, and office-copied, and every party to the suit had to be served formally with a copy of everything, and a nice hunt after the different parties *that* led to. Then the Master made his report, and the cause came on for 'further directions,' and the report had to be referred back again to the Master for amendment, and as he had died during the then recent long vacation, the whole thing had to be gone into afresh before his successor, who took a new and entirely different view of it, and a nice compound dilemma *that* occasioned. It spoke highly for the vitality of the suit, and the activity of the lawyers engaged in it, that Joss and Gargle was always 'in the paper,' as they termed it—now for hearing, now for further directions, now for judgment, now on appeal, now for re-hearing, now on petition. Everybody seemed to have 'liberty to apply,' of which they frequently availed themselves, and 'went to the court' on the lightest provocation. It was before Masters of the Rolls A, B, and C; Lords-chancellor D, E, and F had each bestowed many days of their judicial career upon it, and it had once even victimised those lordships who had been on a certain occasion appointed Commissioners of the Great Seal. There had been a pitched battle fought in the House of Lords, and more than one desperate encounter before the Lords of the Privy Council; while innumerable skirmishes had been carried on before Masters in Lunacy, Commissioners of Bankruptcy, and Masters in Chancery. 'Joss and Gargle' was, in fact, a by-word and a joke throughout Lincoln's Inn, Westminster, and Chancery Lane. It was certainly a wonderful suit. I have only hinted at the heads of it—just indicated a few dry spots appearing in that sea of obscurity—in order that the reader may be able to appreciate, in some very slight degree, Mr Bunker's grievance.

It was this 'Joss and Gargle' that Bunker was perpetually developing, as a juggler at a fair produces an endless tube from his mouth, and then winding-up his performances something like a juggler also, by requesting a loan of specie from his audience for the further carrying out of his conjurations. Does the reader wonder longer that it was a throe to me to hear Bunker's knock at the door? Since that, and his wiping his boots on the mat, his creaking, dry cough, and his taking a seat and waiting in my hall, were but the preludes to acute mental tension on my part, terminating in severe and repeated pecuniary loss.

'How do you *do*, my dear sir? How do you *do?* But need I ask? You are looking charmingly; you are growing stout, I think, like your dear father; not so fine a man, perhaps, altogether; you'll excuse the liberty. I knew him intimately, poor soul—poor soul, when he was only *so* high! A good creature, sir—a kind man; *he* could never shut his ears to the cry of distress; an open heart, sir, and an open pocket!'

'Too open, perhaps, Mr Bunker.'

'Perhaps so, sir, perhaps so—my remark to him a hundred times. He was only too generous—too liberal. Forgive this tear, sir—a worthy tribute to so worthy a man.' (Of this tear, I should mention that I never obtained any more than hearsay evidence; I never saw it.) 'My poor, kind, generous friend! You grow strangely like him; you do indeed—just what he was at your age.'

'Well—well, Mr Bunker'——

'Precisely—precisely; how like your father's assumed irritability! To business, you would say? Quite so—to business.'

'Really, Mr Bunker, I have no time'——

'Not two minutes, my dear sir; I will not detain you two minutes. I'll sit here, thank you; this chair will do very well indeed. No, not nearer the fire; by no means.'

'The fact is—an appointment'——

'Pray, pardon me. I have, I think, before mentioned to you the Chancery proceedings in which I am interested. Dear me, how like your frown is to your father's! Well, Joss and Gargle is again in the Chancellor's list! There is a petition on behalf of the infant Bowker Joss, the third child of the lunatic'——

'A most particular engagement'——

'Whose claim on the fund in court really bears a remarkable analogy to my own. Now, if this be decided—as I think it will—in favour of the petitioner'——'

'Mr Bunker, I really cannot, at the present moment'——

'Quite so. I am sure, however, a little reflection will make this analogy quite clear to you.'

'I don't mean'——

'No, no. You would not be so precipitate, I know; but the fact is, I have a letter here—now, this is very remarkable—a letter in the testator's own handwriting—do you follow me?—own handwriting, which really throws an extraordinary light upon this part of the case. You will agree with me, I am sure'——

'It's quite impossible'——

'Oh, I feel satisfied you will, when you have seen the letter. Let me see. I brought it with me, somewhere. In my right-side pocket? No. My left? No. Where can it be? Ah! my pocket-book? No! My hat, then? Quite right: it *is* in my hat.'

A letter is produced—a yellow crumpled document—very closely written, and three sides covered. Agony! Is he going to read it? He is searching for his tortoise-shell glasses: they also are forthcoming after a prolonged quest. He is slowly wiping them with an old yellow silk handkerchief. Deliberately he fixes them on the bridge of his nose, in close contiguity to his silver spectacles. It is not to be borne.

'Mr Bunker, I must beg'——

'One moment. *This* is the letter. Now, the testator says here—— You will find this really very remarkable, very remarkable indeed. He is speaking of the Calm Retreat estate at the very time when the question as to the title of the consignees of the produce'——

'I must insist'——

'It will not occupy two minutes. Well, well; you would rather not? not now, perhaps. I will leave the letter with you, then, to read at your leisure; I assure you it will repay perusal. You'll find it singularly full of interest—full of interest; and I'll call for it—when shall we say? Shall it be to-morrow? Not to-morrow? Well, the next day. Let me see—that will be Wednesday. Quite so. Wednesday, at one? At one be it.'

'Good-morning, Mr Bunker.'

'One word more. You'll pardon me, I'm sure you will. Ah! my dear sir, how many obligations I am under to your family and to you, sir. May I venture to ask—— I'll write an acknowledgment—most certainly I will. Five pounds? Let me make it five pounds? No? Ah, my dear sir, your good, kind father would not have refused me. No, sir, he never would. He was a very good friend to me, sir. I knew him when he was *so* high.'

'Mr Bunker, I can *not*—I will not'——

'Two ten, then; say two ten; let me write two ten? No? Ah, there is less kindness in the world than there used to be! Thirty shillings? For the sake of the past—you will not refuse me—a sovereign? fifteen shillings? ten—ten-and-six? Thank you, thank you; you overwhelm me. Bless you, bless you, my very dear sir. How like your father—how singularly like; the same free, open hand! Thank you. Here is the acknowledgment. Be careful not to blot it: I think it's wet. Good-morning—*good-morning*. Wednesday, one o'clock; you'll read the letter of the testator? and I'll take care to let you know when Joss and Gargle will come on. Thank you, my dear sir. I knew your father, sir'——

I slammed the door, shutting out Bunker, Joss and Gargle, and, alas! my ten-and-sixpence. But Bunker was a man of his word. If he said that he would come again on Wednesday, why, on Wednesday he would come, bringing with him, of course, his grievance, and departing, of course, with another ten-and-sixpence. It was insufferable. Something must be done to put an end to this continual dunning.

'Mary, I am never at home to Mr Bunker. You understand me? On no pretence is he to be allowed to enter the house, much less ever again to take a seat and wait on my hall-chair.'

Mary was a faithful domestic, and in every way competent to fill the post of door-ward to which she was thus elevated. I was prepared for her strength of mind and adroitness parrying the persistent attacks even of Bunker: I think she approved of the duty intrusted to her. Already I had overheard her deliver herself of opinions unfavourable to the general conduct of Bunker; she had classed him as 'one of them beggar-people.'

I relied, then, upon Mary's undertaking always to interpose the street-door between me and my bore. I tried not to shiver or to listen when I heard a certain knock. I used great precautions in going out and returning, looked anxiously around to ascertain that the dreaded olive-green coat, the over-large hat, and the frayed umbrella lurked not in waiting about my dwelling for my overthrow. No man took greater precautions to avoid the officers of the sheriff than I did to evade the attack of Bunker.

Mary grew triumphant. She was prone to report the number of her victories.

'*He* called again to-day, sir.' 'He's been trying it on again, sir.' 'He said it was a life-and-death matter to-day, sir.' 'Here again, but it wasn't a bit of use.' 'He got his foot in this morning—tried to stop the door being shut. Didn't I give him a wrench neither! Only a little one!' 'I speaks to him now from the airy, sir; so he ain't got a chance now.'

'Thank you, Mary. You needn't trouble yourself to tell me anything more about him. Whether he comes or not, please not to mention him to me. I would rather forget him altogether.'

I did not forget him, though; and, what was worse, I positively missed him. To encounter Bunker and his grievance, and be plundered by him, had become a habit—something to be almost daily looked for and undergone, like one's shaving or cold bath. Sometimes—such is the weakness of our nature—I almost longed to be able to meet Bunker once again; just as the most respectable and pacific man would sometimes give anything to have a fight with anybody, by way of exercising his muscles and waking up his dormant combativeness. I was a little ashamed, too, that I had had to call in feminine aid to defeat Bunker, and that Mary had been able to succeed where I had so repeatedly and egregiously failed. I lamented that I was unable to say, 'Alone I did it.' It would have been a real glory to me to have been able to apply such a balm to my damaged self-respect, to have paid so handsome a tribute to my strength of character as the words, 'I met Bunker face to face, man to man; we fought, and I slew him.'

Months passed, and I neither heard of nor saw Bunker. Mary had prevailed. I was relieved of my bore; still there was a weight upon my heart—there was a void in my life. I was at breakfast. I remember I was fracturing the top of my second egg. Mine is a quiet street. The vivid notes of the drum and fife of a Punch-and-Judy entertainment struck upon my ear. Such music has always an irresistible charm for me. I rose from my chair; I went to the window. I saw the Punch-and-Judy man making signals of distress to various first floors. I saw more. There was the figure of a man seated upon my door-step. He wore an olive-green coat, an over-large hat, woollen gloves, and whity-brown gaiters; more—tucked under his arm was a frayed brown silk umbrella. I could not be mistaken: it was Bunker!

An uncontrollable desire swayed me, possessed me wholly; I would have it out with him. I dashed on my hat, and in an instant stood on the door-step. Like other great captains, I thought it best to throw away the scabbard. *I shut the street-door after me.* Slowly and astonished, Bunker arose—delight, hope, amazement, struggled for possession of his features, and over all there was an air of triumph, of confidence, that dashed me a good deal. His arms began waving in circles, of which his hips were the centre.

'Ah, my dear sir—my very dear sir, this is indeed a pleasure. How singularly you resemble your father this morning!'

I winced.

'I have communications of great importance to make to you; much for you to hear, much for you to read, touching the great suit of Joss and Gargle.'

I trembled.

'Sir, it was my delightful privilege to know your father when he was only *so* high. Sir'——

I ran away. I pushed aside Bunker, leaped down the steps, and dashed madly up the street. I had not outlived the spell. The power of my bore still prevailed over me. I had overestimated my strength. An omnibus was passing along the crowded thoroughfare upon which my street debouches; I hailed it. I hardly waited for its stopping; I clambered up the inconvenient staircase in its rear, and severely contusing my knees, gained an insecure seat upon the knife-board. 'Saved! saved!' I cried, after the manner of a heroine in a melodrama. And my bore?

Omnibuses take circuitous routes; they can be often overtaken by one who knows how to thread narrow streets and cut-off corners. In five minutes, another passenger hailed the omnibus, but got inside. I had just time to see that he had on an olive-green coat, and carried a frayed umbrella. My anguish passed all bounds. It was like sitting on an oven, to be riding on the knife-board of that omnibus, with my bore inside. I crept to the end—I paid the conductor. 'Don't stop,' I said; 'I can get down without.'

'Serene!' was the strange yet sole reply of the conductor.

I got down—perhaps I should say I fell down. No matter; I was soon on my legs again—the omnibus swinging on a long way in the distance. Racing, I hoped and prayed. I jumped into a cab—it was a four-wheeler.

'Drive on—anywhere—as fast as you can!'

The cabman grinned and winked violently. I have never arrived at the meaning of those actions on his part. He lashed his horse; the horse coughed painfully, and then started off with a spasmodic speed impossible to be maintained. In two minutes, it collapsed into a consumptive sort of amble. There was the noise of wheels behind, so I put out my head, only to become agonisingly conscious of a furious Hansom in full pursuit, and inside—Bunker!

'Let me out!'

We halted just in front of a small coffee-shop. I can now remember that we had somehow reached the Waterloo Road. I entered the coffee-shop; there were but few people in it. I rushed to the furthest compartment, and there began to peruse a tea-stained copy of the *Globe* newspaper, three days old. I read furiously.

'Ah, my dear sir—my very dear sir.'

Bunker was before me!

'Spare me!' I proposed to myself to cry out, but the words tumbled into quite incoherent sounds. I put down the newspaper; I endeavoured to collect myself, to summon all my energies, and endure my cruel fate with decency.

'I have sought you long and earnestly.'

I knew it.

'For weeks and weeks.'

I quite believed it.

'The great suit of Joss *versus* Gargle'——

I groaned. He had commenced with the old prelude.

'The great suit of Joss *versus* Gargle is wound up—finished. The fund in court has been divided—share and share alike—my claim has been allowed. I've got my money. I owe you and yours, my dear sir, an inappreciable debt of gratitude. More—I owe you this: take it, sir—take it. Thank the new Chancery reforms. Send back acknowledgments at your leisure. Bless you, sir, bless you. Good-morning—*good*-morning. I knew your father when he was only *so* high.'

And he was gone.

'Bless you, Bunker!' I cried madly after him, but he had passed out of hearing.

I turned to look at what he had thrust into my hand. It was a jumble of notes and gold, silver and copper, and all genuine money. It was not a dream. I was for a long time too dizzy and confused altogether to attempt anything like an addition sum. After a cup of coffee and a muffin, I felt a little more equal to the task.

Bunker had repaid me the sum of four hundred and seventy-seven pounds, twelve shillings, and threepence three farthings!

For weeks I had been evading a debtor; I had been keeping money out of the house.

I have never had—I fear I never shall have such another bore; and I have never seen Bunker since.

SYDNEY AND ITS SUBURBS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

Up silent Pitt Street South, with weather-board cottages, to which there seems no means of ingress, perched upon its rocky sides; past a couple of handsome chapels, a vast number of shabby houses, and a School of Arts, into Pitt Street North—the London Haymarket and Regent Street combined, degraded, and looked at through the wrong end of the telescope. Even with these qualifications, I fear the comparison is too flattering. Drapers', tailors', jewellers', photographers' establishments, a theatre, and oyster-rooms, a bevy of bucks and belles by day, and a swarm of rather riotous gentry of both sexes by night, constitute the only points of resemblance. As we go, we may as well drop into an auctioneer's or two. Here, as at home, the hook-nosed children of Israel gather vulture-like at a sale; but the auction plays a far more important part in Sydney than in London. Wholesale trade is carried on almost entirely by its means. Cargo after cargo is scattered by the downfall of the hammer. It is amusing to read the auctioneers' advertisements: pianos and pickles, books and blacking, grindstones and 'gray domestics,' are jumbled in one laughter-moving medley. When I first saw the last item advertised—not being up, as counter-jumpers say, in 'the drapery'—I was horror-struck; I thought that some heartless squatter was about to dispose of his worn-out black fellows.

When I arrived in Sydney, the *Morning Herald* had its local habitation in Lower George Street, in an office as dingy, as dusty, and as finger-rubbed as its namesake's in Shoe Lane. Now it has that noble pile of white-stone building at the corner of Hunter Street for its home—handsomer outside than the *Morning Post* office, and more capacious and convenient than the whole of Printing House Square. A profitable property is the *Herald*. The net annual gain of the present proprietor, who bought out his late partner for L.70,000, is said to be L.20,000. He owns a handsome town-house and an elegant country villa. He pays an editor, a junior editor, a sub-editor, and a numerous staff of reporters, *Times* salaries. L.1000 is said to be his weekly office expenses. The paper has no less than four paid correspondents in London. It may be seen, therefore, that southern journalism is as go-ahead as any other branch of southern enterprise.

In Upper Hunter Street, the houses have a look of what Mr Thackeray calls 'dowagerism.' Verandahed, balconied, and dilapidated, they speak of the elder days of the colony.

That block of buildings, with the Cyclops-eye-like clock in its brow, is the Government Emigrant Barracks. Here emigrant servant-girls are housed till hired. Those sent out, for the most part, have never been beneath a decent roof until they take their first colonial place. Here they stay until their mistresses have taught them to be comparatively useful, and then decamp in search of higher wages. Some of their reasons for leaving are ludicrously droll. I knew one who threw up a most comfortable place because 'missus warn't suffishent femelier' with her. The airs that these young ladies give themselves at the various labour agencies to which they resort for fresh engagements are almost incredibly absurd. Feathered and crinolined in the most extravagant style, they speak with contemptuous condescension to the more plainly-dressed gentlewomen who require their services. It is really not a farce-writer's joke, but a simple colonial fact, that Sydney servants not unfrequently refuse to engage with Sydney mistresses unless the latter can get good characters from their last handmaidens. In Sydney, emphatically, the servant-girl is the 'greatest plague in life.' She comes out, not to work, but wed. The high wages she gets she spends in eclipsing her employer's toilet, and makes the humbled lady drudge almost as much as if she had not obtained a help; whilst the impertinence the minx lavishes upon her, far more than compensates for the trifling aid she does receive. Colonial servants may be concisely characterised as lodgers that you pay to board with and abuse you.

Turning the corner by the church, we come out upon the Race-course, or Hyde Park, a grassy oblong, intersected by a road, and traversed by a tree-shaded path. Here, by day, cricket-balls are ever whizzing about your ears, like shells at a bombardment—for the name of the Sydney cricket-clubs is legion, and capitally they play the noble game—and by night, especially on Sunday night, hosts of the disreputable of both sexes in the city throng the avenue.

Beyond, Woolloomooloo, or Wala Mala, the Place of Tombs—once a black fellows' burial-place, now a camp of lodging-houses—sweeps from the Surrey Hills to the harbour an avalanche of brick and mortar pill-boxes. You see a 'Furnished or Unfurnished Apartments' card in every second window. Clerks, fleas, landladies, and mosquitoes constitute the population. Two windmills crown the height above the valley on one side; gloomy Darlinghurst Jail, built of stones, each notched with a convict's initials, tops it on the other. Between them, a tree-shaded, serpentine, red road leads to the South Head, a favourite resort of holiday-making southern Cockneys. Hither, on leisure days, sacred and secular, they flock on horseback and on foot, in 'bus and cab, gig, carriage, cart; to ascend the light-house, thence to watch the Pacific specked with far-off sails like gulls' wings, to play quoits, to ramble in the scrub, and to patronise very extensively the pair of hostelries. The South Head road on a holiday night reminds us Londoners of the return from the Derby—only in its boisterousness, however; we cannot match its beauty. Bay after bay, foliage-fringed to its cream-white shore, shimmers back the moonlight on the one hand; on the other, there is the fragrant, whispering, mysterious bush, and now and then, the lulling sound of falling waters. The telegraph poles that zigzag about the road, like lanky, pale, pinched ghosts, are the only ugly things you see. I am not speaking of persons however. Leaving the returning revellers out of the question, there is Rickety Dick, a grotesque and grinning black fellow, who lives, Diogenes-like, in a tub close by Rose Bay, and with outstretched ape-like paw levies contributions from all passers-by. Dick is the only surviving member of the Botany Bay tribe. Some recently arrived evangelists, whose zeal surpassed their knowledge, got up a society for the christianisation of the blacks. Four missionaries were appointed for the recovery of this tribe; but, alas! Dick was the only one they could find to operate upon. He was rather astonished to see the quaternion come to a halt before his kennel, but, I believe, proved himself, *pro tem.*, a very ready convert, professing his willingness to be any religion they liked, if they would only stand a 'ball' of rum.

But we must turn down Macquarie Street, the Sydney Westminster. A colonial satirist has said that everything in New South Wales has been called after Governor Macquarie except its bug, and therefore proposes to dub it *Cimex Macquariensis*. Here are the government offices; here, too, are the chambers of the Legislative Council and Assembly—the one an iron edifice of bastard Gothic; the other, a white-washed cross between a barracks and a workhouse. The M. L. C.s are the colonial 'Lords'—the 'Botany Bay barons,' to whom Mr Wentworth proposed to give substantial titles. The Upper House, however, being principally composed of those who have no chance of getting into the Lower, is now generally known by the irreverent name of 'The Refuge for the Destitute.' Amongst the M. L. A.s—or M. P.s, as they delight in calling themselves—there are a few men of more than average talent; but the general tone of their proceedings strikes a stranger as a very comical parody of parliament. In this street, also, are the Infirmary and the Mint.

There, where you see the sentry, is the gate of the Inner Domain, the 'pleasaunce' of Government House. The flag floating above it shews that His Excellency is at home. The late governor patronised buffaloes; the present has red-deer for the tenants of his grounds. Both have proved rather disagreeable customers. The former routed a volunteer regiment that Sir Charles Fitzroy, its colonel, was reviewing; the latter are in the habit of goring every now and then Sir William Denison himself.

We, by these gates, over which the green statue of Sir Richard Bourke keeps guard, will enter the Outer Domain, a roughly kept park of great and varied beauty. Grove and lawn, rock, avenue, and thicket, fringed with the bright-blue sea, by which grottoed walks wind in staircases of stone, make the Domain a very pleasant strolling-place. Woolloomooloo Bay bounds it upon one side. Here floats an old hulk—a bathing-house for those who choose to undress under cover, and swim without fear of sharks. A little further on, at a point called the Fig-tree, less pecunious bathers defy, in unpalisaded water, the saw-mouthed monsters of the deep. Garden Island lies darkly green beyond. The heights above the Fig-tree and Lady Macquarie's Chair command the harbour, and are therefore densely thronged upon regatta-days—frequent days with the Sydneyites; for what with anniversary-days, Queen's birthdays, English, Scotch, and Irish saints' days, and the ordinary home holidays, they manage to secure a glorious amount of *dies non*, all of which are celebrated by some sort of marine matches. Great people for picnics are the sons and daughters of Sydney, also. Whenever for a brief while panting business slumbers, the harbour's shores are dotted everywhere with fowl-devouring, wine-bibbing, waltzing merry-makers.

A dwarf avenue leads from the Domain into the Botanic Gardens. They are most tastefully laid out on a slope inclining to the water, with turf-plots, rustic chairs, and seats cut out of the rock. Within ten minutes, you may see the 'feathery' palm, the sugar-cane, the tea and coffee plants, great ferns projecting from the walls like huge stags' antlers in some old baronial hall, prickly cactuses, three times your height, bursting out in a rush of light-red blossom, the aloe, the banana, the glossy foliage of the fig, the chestnut-like leaf of the loquat, the plume-like tuft of the tall pampas-grass, the bamboo creaking in each passing breeze—its undeveloped canes looking like heads of Brobdignagian asparagus—the graceful pyramid of the Norfolk Island pine, the ruddy clusters of the West Indian coral-tree, the native pear, with its fruit about as eatable as a deal-board—fully justifying its learned name, the *Xylomelon pyriforme*—lilies as big as laburnums, the gray-green olive, the silvery poplar, the dear old English oak, and many more trees, and shrubs, and flowers, familiar and foreign, beyond my skill to enumerate. The botanical and popular appellations are painted on a board beneath almost every specimen; and in one part of the gardens there is a regular arrangement of plants according to the Natural System—a most valuable aid to the tyro—Lindley, for whose benefit, also, the director delivers lectures. Just before you come to it, you pass an obelisk islanded in a little pond, and overarched with tall, sad, drooping willows. It is thus inscribed: 'Erected to the Memory of ALLAN CUNNINGHAM, Botanist, 1844.' He lost his life in an exploring expedition. At high tide, the limpid waters of Farm Cove wash the gardens' miniature 'sea-wall.' At low tide, you can amuse yourself by watching the movements of a peculiar kind of crab. Like thousands of pale, locomotive plums, they traverse the wet, shimmering, salinely fragrant sands. At all times, you can see proud vessels gliding by, their snowy sails brightly embossed upon the distant, dusky foliage.

These gardens, I have noticed, are the favourite morning lounge of disconsolate new-comers. Here, prone, supine, or huddled into a heap upon the benches, they watch the flitting flocks of dainty little diamond sparrows with lack-lustre eyes, and muse mournfully of home. Hither, in the afternoon, especially on the days when the garrison band plays, the belles of Sydney 'spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipsæ' by the crowds of puppies, who, disregarding the painted prohibition at the entrance, then also saunter into the gardens. Hither, on flower-show days, the whole fashionable world of Sydney musters in strongest force.

Let us retrace our steps, and turn into Bent Street. That pinky-brown building of indefinite order of architecture which curves round the corner is the Subscription Library; that tall white one with green verandas and balconies, some way further down, is the Australian Club, the southern 'Carlton.' In and about it squatters lounge lazily, stare haughtily, drink copiously, and expectorate amazingly.

We descend into Hunter Street once more. It is worth while to accept the invitation of that smirkingly civil, hands-with-'invisible-soap'-washing Prussian barber to enter his shop to be shampooed, for the sake of a chat with his comical little assistant, a recent importation from the Salt Lake. Ask him his present opinion of the Mormons, and he informs you that 'Mormons is verdammt beasts—dey has too much wife.' George Street, which we have reached again, is separated by a stony waste, dignified with the name of Winyard Square, and sundry dingy parallel streets, intersected by rough sloping ones, from Darling Harbour, the port for steamers and coasters. In the square, we find two more clubs, the Union and the German. We have plenty of clubs, you see, but unfortunately we don't possess a colonial Thackeray. Low publics, shabby printing-offices, a minor theatre, and sundry synagogues, are the most prominent buildings of the intervening streets. The shore is fringed with gas-works, coal-yards, and slaughter-houses—emitting doleful groans and direr stench—and swarms with a small-fry of ragged *amphibia*. The Sydney children of the street take to the water as naturally as ducklings. You see them everywhere fishing or floundering in the harbour, rowing about in some crazy old tub of a boat that they have managed to get hold of, or crawling in and out of the slimy piles of the jetties like slightly magnified crabs. From the wharfs in this part of the town start the magnificent Melbourne boats, as fine as any afloat. Steamers to Moreton Bay, the Hunter River, Wollongong, Kiama, and Tasmania, also depart hence; and there is a perfect shoal of what a Londoner would call 'river-boats' for Parramatta, Cremorne, Manly Beach, and Watson's Bay—holiday-making places within Port Jackson. On special occasions, a boat conveys those who are willing to brave sea-sickness, by venturing outside the Heads, to Botany, where pretty tea-gardens and a wild-beast show compensate them for their nausea. Tiny steam ferry-boats splutter across every ten minutes or so to rocky Pyrmont, famed for its patent slip, and picturesque Balmain—a graceful chaos of wood and crag—still more famous for its dry dock, a marvel of engineering skill, that has induced the huge English mail-steamers to make Balmain their head-quarters. The Thames at Rotherhithe will give a good notion of Darling Harbour, so far as coasters and wherries are concerned. A fleet of used-up whalers lies anchored off its entrance at Miller's Point, and is known as 'Rotten Row.'

We have got round to the point from which we started. Of course, I have been able to give but the most meagre sketch of the finest city, in the sunny south—Melbourne has no Port Jackson—but as far as it goes, it is faithful. I have tried to select the salient points for my picture. If any one wishes to get a more definite idea of my subject, I would advise him to take a trip to it, and can assure him that he will not regret the voyage.

LOVE.

BY THE LATE T. K. HERVEY.

THERE are who say the lover's heart
Is in the loved one's merged;
Oh, never by love's own warm art
So cold a plea was urged!
No!—hearts that love hath crowned or crossed,
Love fondly knits together;
But not a thought or hue is lost
That made a part of either.

Expanding in the soft bright heat
That draweth each to other,
Each feels itself in every beat,
Though beating for another;
It is their very union's art
The separate parts to prove,
And man first learns how great his heart
When he has learned to love.

The loving heart gives back as due
The treasure it has found—
As scents return to him who threw
The precious things around—
As mirrors shew, because they're bright,
What shadows o'er them move—
Receives the light, and by the light
Reflects the form of love.

As he who, wrapt in fancy's dream,
Bends o'er some wave at even,
Yet deep within the sunlight stream
Sees but himself and heaven—
So, looketh through his loved one's eyes,
In search of all things rare,
The lover—and amid love's skies
Himself is everywhere.

It is an ill-told tale that tells
Of 'hearts by love made one;'
He grows who near another's dwells
More conscious of his own:
In each spring up new thoughts and powers
That, 'mid love's warm clear weather,
Together tend like climbing flowers,
And, turning, grow together.

Such fictions blink love's better part,
Yield up its half of bliss;
The wells are in the neighbour heart
When there is thirst in this:
There findeth love the passion-flowers
On which it learns to thrive,
Makes honey in another's bowers,
But brings it home to hive.

Love's life is in its own replies—
To each low beat it beats,
Smiles back the smiles, sighs back the sighs,
And every throb repeats.
Then, since one loving heart still throws
Two shadows in love's sun,
How should two loving hearts compose
And mingle into one?

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MENZAL'S PIES.

It was the time when spring and winter meet at the vernal equinox; the wind was from the west, the rain was heavy, the Danube was rising, and there was great trepidation and hasty packing up in those low-lying streets in the oldest part of Vienna, which have had the benefit of his visits ever since they were built. One man, however, sat undisturbed amid the general terror, working away in his stall at the top of a steep and crooked lane. The waters had never been known to rise so high as that ground; it was the slope of an ancient earthen rampart thrown up at the back of the old castle, when the last Tatar army invaded Europe; and the man who worked in composed consciousness of that fact was named Ludwig Menzal. Ludwig held the rank of a cobbler, which might be considered hereditary in his family, his father and grandfather having practised the same gentle craft. His business was not extensive, the popular account of Ludwig's operations being that he mended one hole, and made two. His fortune consisted of a yearly increasing family; his house was the neighbouring cellar; and his life was governed by that ancient and greatly followed rule of conduct—the apron-string. Nevertheless, Ludwig had found out for himself three causes of pride: first, that he was a true Austrian; secondly, that he was a good Catholic; and thirdly, that none of his house or lineage had ever been executed.

He was musing on these subjects of congratulation, and endeavouring to cobble the heel of an old boot for the night-watchman of the district, who, being one of the most distinguished of his customers, was also one of the most crusty. His light was growing dim, for the night was falling fast, and the rain still faster. He knew that Frau Menzal was in rather a stormy temper, for her voice could be heard above the screams of the seven children in the cellar; but the supper was in preparation; he sniffed the *kraut;* when his eye was caught by the figure of a man seeking shelter in the doorway opposite. He was not ragged, but his clothes seemed thin. He could not be rich, or he would not have stood there in such an evening; besides, Ludwig thought there was something very cold and hungry-looking about him. There was room for two in the stall; the frau was busy scolding within; and unmindful of probable consequences, the kindly cobbler beckoned to the stranger, who lost no time in availing himself of the proffered refuge. The moment he got in, his thanks were poured forth, fervent and manifold, but in such bad German, that Ludwig knew he must be an outsider; and a second glance shewed him that he had offered the hospitalities of his stall to a native of France. Being a true Austrian, the cobbler felt called upon to hate the French; being a good Catholic, he contemned them as the countrymen of Voltaire; and as none of his ancestors had ever been executed, he considered himself in very low company, for a charitable German proverb asserts that most of the French deserve hanging. At the time of our story, the long-winded feud between the Houses of Hapsburg and Bourbon had been finished by an alliance which was to last for ever. The Austrian kaiser's sister shared the throne of France, and nothing more serious than the affair of the diamond necklace had yet troubled the dancing, dressing days of Marie Antoinette. But at the cobbler's stand-point, national antipathies do not disappear behind treaty-parchments and royal weddings. The artisans and burghers of Vienna continued to repeat proverbs as flattering to their Gallic neighbours as the above mentioned; and the democracy of Paris occasionally recollected that their queen was an Austrian. Ludwig's worst suspicions were confirmed by a little conversation. The stranger was a Frenchman; he had come to Vienna in search of his fortune, and a cousin supposed to occupy an influential position in that courtly city. He had found neither cousin nor fortune, had no money, no friends, and no employment. It was a bad case; and notwithstanding his national claims on the cobbler's scorn and aversion, Ludwig could not help seeing that the man was cold, hungry, and tired. To ask him into the family-supper was more than a husband accustomed to the yoke could venture on; but St Crispin suggested a worthy expedient. Nobody but a saint could have inspired such kindly cunning. The pious frauds of all the ages were nothing to it. The cobbler waited quietly till his nose informed him the supper was ready, then he stepped in and told Madame Menzal that he could save a candle-end and finish that boot by taking his share with him to the stall. The saving of anything was sure to meet with Madame Menzal's warmest approbation; like most German wives, she was a great economist; the state of the family finances made her abilities in that line by no means superfluous; and the frau congratulated herself for many a day on the improvement which her precept and example had at length effected on her less careful spouse.

Whatever disparaging remarks the son of Gaul might have made among his native vines on sour kraut, anise-seed cheese, bread like a deal-board, and German cookery in general—the said kraut, bread, and cheese which should have formed the cobbler's supper, went down with a celerity which astonished

Ludwig, who sat by hoping that his better-half would not find out the road they had taken, and wondering whether or not his visitor had ever eaten a Christian meal before.

'Well, friend,' he said, in reply to the profuse thanks which had to serve him for supper, 'I am sorry I can't give you a bed; my family is large, and we have little room. (He might have said the frau would not allow it; but Ludwig was judicious, and liked to look the master when he could.) I wish you could find your cousin, or get some situation; but if you like to sleep in the stall, my leather apron does not make a bad pillow. You need not be too late rising, for the police keep a sharp look-out on vagrants—strangers, I mean; and though I have not much to spare, you'll be welcome to a share of my supper any night you can't get a better one, only my wife's rather nervous about foreigners, and it will be better not to let her see you.'

The stranger had got over being particular about his sleeping accommodations. He thanked Ludwig once more in his broken German, laid himself down in the corner where he sat, and fell fast asleep without the leather apron. That he might, however, enjoy the said luxury, Ludwig made haste to finish the boot, folded his apron neatly, and slipped it under the head of the sleeper, who never woke; but the cobbler noted, by the glimmer of a street-lamp which shone in, that he was young, handsome, and had very white hands. Having made these observations, Ludwig retired with his empty dish to the cellar, where he dreamed all that hungry night of despatching unknown quantities of kraut, brought in china basins by wet Frenchmen; and in the morning was rewarded with the choicest curses of the night-watch, who declared that he never saw viler cobbling executed, even by Ludwig himself. One comfort, however, remained—Madame Menzal got no scent of the stranger; he had departed before she looked out in the morning; but the frau's remarks on her husband's performance at the breakfast-table savoured more of wonder than compliment.

The Danube kept his promise, and laid all the lower streets under water to the first-floors. Ludwig's cellar remained safe and dry at the top of that steep lane, and there was a deal of extra cobbling to be done on the shoes which people wore out conveying their goods and families out of the river's reach. He sat late in his stall, to get the work done; and as madame had found out that he could save a candle-end by the business, she insisted on his supper being eaten there, and Ludwig was thinking of some excuse for altering that arrangement, since for three evenings in that week his kraut, &c., had to be shared with the unlucky stranger, who came according to invitation, and slept in the stall. On the fourth day, the evening being dry and fine, madame herself came out to encourage his exertions, and a trembling of heart seized on the cobbler, but this time without reason; the hungry Frenchman did not appear. Wet and dry, the evenings came and went; the shoes were cobbled, the river retired. Ludwig's customers returned to their flooded homes, with not a penny to pay him. Waiting was the word on all sides; yet the seven children must be fed, and Ludwig had made up his mind that charity began at home, and must end there for the present. If the stranger came, there should be no supper for him. These inhospitable resolutions were as superfluous as his terrors had been; the hungry Frenchman came no more. Ludwig concluded that he had found his great cousin, and grown too proud to acknowledge him; just what might be expected from a Frenchman. But the cobbler had something more to think of. Money continued scarce with him and his customers; bread was rising; a share of the family-supper would not be worth having now; his breakfast and dinner were no better; and one morning there was likely to be a solemn fast kept in the cellar. The frau thought they should all sleep over the breakfast-hour, and think they had it; but Ludwig considered such a subterfuge unworthy of a man and an Austrian. He rose and went forth to his stall as usual in the early gray of the morning, and was taking up his leather apron to gird it on as became the descendant of a line of cobblers, when what should appear to his astonished and delighted eyes but a large and magnificent pie!

There it stood, without explanation or apology, in a dish finer than any he had dreamed of, quietly deposited under the apron. He broke off a morsel of the crust, and tasted it; there was no delusion, but genuine paste of a richer quality than had ever passed his lips before. Here was something better than sleeping for the frau and the seven. Pies do not come of their own accord; whoever placed it there, intended them to eat it. Some good Christian had taken pity on their necessity; and with these arguments in his mind and on his tongue, Ludwig lost no time in rousing his family to their good-fortune. They made as little delay in availing themselves of what Providence had sent them. Under their united exertions, the magnificent pie disappeared. It was a breakfast whose like had never been made in the cellar; the best of venison, the choicest of spice, and the most perfect of baking had formed that matchless dish; and when the earthen-ware which contained it was scraped and washed, the frau declared it was a utensil quite above their station, so she prudently took it to the Jews' quarter, and sold it to haggling Moses for half a florin. Ludwig had great fears that somebody would come back for the dish, but nobody came. The seven children could talk of nothing but pies for that and the following day. It kept them all from feeling the want of bread or money till the third morning, when sleeping was again resolved upon, and Ludwig, going forth to his stall with wonted manhood, found beneath his leather apron, which, like a regular German, he had folded and laid in the same spot for fifteen years, a dish as large as the first, and containing a splendid pudding. With all manner of blessings on the generous donor, it was transferred to the cellar, and finished. Haggling Moses gave another half-florin for the dish. The children began to calculate on pies and puddings coming their way, nor were their fond expectations disappointed, for every third morning, as sure as the cobbler lifted his leather apron, there lay under it some choice dish of pastry, fish, or game. On the meagre-days, which have been always strictly observed in pious Vienna, the delicacy belonged to Lent; but the Menzal family would willingly have observed that season of mortification all the year round, could they have got such dishes to keep it on.

The pies, the puddings, and the fish swimming in butter, came day after day, and week after week. The inhabitants of the cellar grew, one and all, fat and rosy, till their neighbours were astonished at their good looks; but whence the supplies came, neither Ludwig nor his frau could discover. He had watched in the stall, and she at the cellar-window, till both grew cold and sleepy, but nobody came up or down the lane all night, yet there the dish would be found in the morning, neatly placed under the leather apron. It is a known fact that few of us mortals can let well alone, and Madame Menzal was no exception to that rule; having less to think of in the matter of breakfast and dinner, her entire attention, with all the weight of woman's curiosity upon it, was turned to the mystery of the dishes. She could not solve it. She had quarrelled with all her neighbours from her earliest days of settlement at the top of the lane, and did not care for talking to any of them on the subject, lest she might get suspected of practising the black-art. With herself and with Ludwig she canvassed it as long as her eyes kept open, and at length arrived at the conclusion, that as there were no Christians good enough to send a poor family such very fine things, the whole business must be a snare of Satan to entrap their souls. Her husband dissented from this doctrine with all his heart. He liked the good things thus quietly provided for him, and argued that it was rather some saint who had taken a special interest in them, as the great Adversary would never help them, surely, to observe the meagre-days. The frau was confounded, but not convinced. Between Satan and the saints, it was a most difficult problem, and in her perplexity she bethought her of the woman's grand resource—her confessor. Ludwig was firm against consulting him, partly because, though a good Catholic, he had doubts that the savoury supplies which rejoiced his own and his children's hearts, came in a fashion not likely to be approved by his reverence, and partly because he had not paid his Easter dues. Such considerations had no weight with the troubled conscience of his spouse, and one evening, after having had her share of a rich game-pie, rather difficult of digestion, the honest woman made her way to the priest.

Madame Menzal's spiritual adviser had done duty in his poor and populous parish for almost fifty years. Having seen executions for witchcraft and sorcery, the old man believed sincerely in them both: they afforded the readiest explanation for everything out of the common course. The mysterious dishes belonged to that order; he had never met with a more striking instance of the Enemy's craft. It was plain to himself, and he soon made it plain to his penitent, that the Evil One was at the bottom of the pies and puddings. Prepared for any alarming discovery, the cobbler's wife was easily persuaded that her soul and those of all her family were in danger, and their only chance of escape from Satan was to give immediate information to the police. The police were accordingly informed as quickly as she could carry the news to the commissary's office. The commissary sent a dispatch to the minister; the minister sent another to Prince Kaunitz; Prince Kaunitz sent a note back to the minister; and within two hours, Ludwig Menzal, his seven children, and the entire furniture of his cellar and stall, including the leather apron, were carried away to the police-office. The arrests of the day did not end there; haggling Moses, together with his household, all the crockery-ware to be found in his miscellaneous shop, all the customers who had bought the dishes from him, all who had eaten out of them at their tables, all who had looked at and did not buy them, were safe in the grasp of the legal authorities.

Vienna, like the rest of the Austrian empire, reposed at that time under the settling sway of the minister above named. Most readers of history know that he held the reins of government for some thirty years in spite of three emperors, and bequeathed them to his worthy successor, son-in-law, and pupil—Prince Metternich; that he was renowned for the number of his wigs, the depth of his diplomacy, and his general determination that everything in this world should stand at the point where he found it. His Highness knew that the spirit of innovation was abroad in those days; there were people talking of equal laws and taxation in France, though it was nine years yet to the taking of the Bastile. Prince Kaunitz did not recognise the possibility of such events; the sorcery which troubled the old priest had long ago lost its terrors for court and palace people; but His Highness thought there might be some secret society concerned with the cobbler's dishes. His own dinner had some disturbing consequences that day. His seven secretaries had observed with affright that the prince had assumed the shortest and most frizzled of his six hundred wigs, which always indicated the extreme height of ill-humour, and they felt quite prepared to write his peremptory orders for a general arrest and a searching investigation.

The Marquis de Beauvais had been sent that Easter to Vienna as an envoy-extraordinary, charged with the condolence of Versailles to Joseph II., on the decease of his imperial mother, which had left him as much of independent sovereignty as Kaunitz would allow. The marquis was a man of no party; the rights of the people and the privileges of the nobility were alike no concern to him. 'Let there be peace in my day,' was M. de Beauvais' motto; he was therefore a favourite with everybody in power. Prince Kaunitz entertained him with the grandest of state-dinners, and the choicest of his *cuisine*, of which the marquis only remembered that he had seen, marshalling the dishes *à la Française*, Jean Router, the skilful *chef* who had prepared dinners and suppers not yet forgotten in his own *hôtel* in Versailles. The marquis was meditating on what his entertainer might have meant by that tap on his snuff-box when they drank the health of his Most Christian Majesty, when his valet came to tell him that one of the prince's servants was below, wishing to speak with him a moment in private.

'Shew him up here,' said the marquis. 'Tell him I am alone in the library; and, Alphonse, you are a lad of discretion; here is the key; when he is fairly in, just step quietly into my study, and keep as near the door beside me here as you please. Well to have a witness to any proposal from Kaunitz,' he muttered to himself as the confidential valet departed to execute his orders. In a minute or two the prince's servant appeared.

'Does he really send his cook on such errands?' thought the marquis, for it was Jean Router, who made his old master a very confused bow, and hoped his honour would pardon him.

'No offence, my good Jean; I am glad to find you in such good service. Pray, is it on your own or your master's account you come to see me?'

'On my own, your honour. I knew you were always kind, and I hope you will do something to help me out of this bad business.'

'What business, Jean? Sit down, and tell your story.'

'Well, marquis,' said Jean, seating himself with the confidence of an old and valued *chef de cuisine*, 'you remember your nephew, M. St Helleré, and the trouble he got into with those verses about the diamond necklace. You know he took flight, for fear of the Bastile; and where should the poor young man come but to Vienna, because, as I honestly believe, Madame Valentine was dancing in the *ballet* here. Well, young men will be foolish; but in his flight he had left everything behind him; was too proud to make his wants known to some of his friends, and afraid that most of them would betray him to the police; had no money at all; and, in short, was very near starving. Indeed, marquis, he would have been starved before I found him out, taking shelter from the rain in the porch of the Capuchin Church, where the patron saint of your family must have sent me to say my prayers, one Saturday evening, if it had not been for the charity of a poor cobbler, with a shrew of a wife, and seven children. The generous soul gave him his own supper more than one night, and let him sleep in his stall, for he dared not take him indoors. Think of that, for a mere German; and you may judge how hard up the poor young man must have been when he swallowed their horrid *kraut* and detestable cheese, after the *plats* I have had the honour to set before him at your own table! So much for verse-making; nothing good ever came of it to my knowledge! But when I found M. St Helleré, and got my friend, the innkeeper of the Three Eagles, to look after him, I knew that Vienna was not the safest quarters for a boy who had written about the diamond necklace; so, with the help of my other friend, the prince's Russian courier, I smuggled him off to Petersburg. He had always talents, and has got a post of some sort in the Prussian embassy; no doubt, he 'll be coming home some of these years with a Russian countess as rich as two Jews. But now I am coming to the after-piece, which happens to be the worst of the play. His Highness the Prince has such a great dislike to hear death mentioned—I understand it grows stronger as he grows old—that nobody, on pain of dismissal, dare tell him that any friend, relation, or acquaintance of his has gone that way. I don't presume to judge great people, but I will say His Highness has his tempers, though in one thing he sets a pious example; for such is his dutifulness to his aunt, the Landgravine Matilda Elizabeth, that for the last twenty years he has sent Her Serenity the choicest dish from his own table twice every week. Now, it happened to be the will of Providence that Her Serenity should leave this world exactly three years ago; but as the prince could not be told of her departure, he continued to send the dishes; and they were sold, among the other perquisites of my office, till I found how nobly the cobbler had behaved. Such goodness should not go unrewarded, said I to myself; and then, you see, I was vain enough to think of acting the benevolent fairy. The poor man never knew where the fine dishes came from. Let me tell your honour, I took some pains with them, and the poor German has got a knowledge of pies and puddings that might serve his betters. Every morning, just before it got light, or we had retired to bed—for the prince is the latest man in Vienna—I slipped out with the last-sent dish, and laid it quietly under his leather apron in the stall. I don't know how long it might have gone on, but women are always doing mischief. The cobbler's wife told her confessor; the confessor made her believe it must be done by magic, and sent her to tell the police; they have arrested the whole family, and I cannot say how many more. The prince thinks there is a secret society at work. They will frighten and cross-question the poor cobbler till he swears anything they like; and some score of innocent people will get into prison through my frolic. For the sake of all the saints, and the good suppers I cooked you, help me, M. de Beauvais!'

There never was such laughter at the French embassy as when the envoy-extraordinary explained the mystery which had engaged the attention of the Austrian police to the resident ambassador. Both were politic men, and it was a cause of considerable debate which should clear up the matter to Prince Kaunitz. The marquis at length undertook the task, as the mischief had been done in paying off his nephew's obligations. He must have managed it dexterously, for His Highness asked him to many an after-dinner, though the dishes to the deceased landgravine were discontinued, and Jean Router lost that valuable addition to his perquisites. The accomplished *chef* was too indispensable to meet with any further reprisals. The Menzals, with all their furniture, were restored to the cellar and stall; haggling Moses was released, together with his crockery-ware and his customers. The cobbler's wife, in her woe for the good things they could expect no more, made the story so public, that the commissary of police sent her a warning. Obedient Vienna, after that, ventured to laugh only in its sleeve at the prince's attentions to his departed aunt; but it was said that honest Ludwig spent a great deal of his time looking out for hungry Frenchmen on wet evenings; and the tale went in the best circles by the name of Menzal's Pies.

BORN IDIOTS BRED SANE.

There is an old proverb which says, 'It is never too late to learn;' and no Englishman need be ashamed to say that he has learned some things from 'the new country.' It was in Pennsylvania that attention was first paid upon a public scale to the care and mental improvement of idiots, or '*born* idiots,' as they are often termed, as a distinction to the hopeless cases where a naturally sound intellect has been destroyed by some illness or external injury. Travellers saw and brought home accounts of the wonderful cures effected by constant medical attendance, combined with a gradual development of the various powers of the mind; and at last the public at home took it up unanimously, and raised subscriptions to build asylums for imbecile children of the poor.

Earlswood, the asylum of which I shall attempt to tell in this paper, is situated a short distance from the Redhill Station, upon the London and Brighton Railway, and is under the patronage of the Queen and the Prince Consort. It is calculated to accommodate 400 children; but at present, owing to the small number of subscribers, only 286 can be admitted, while from a list of annual candidates as large as 140 or 150, the funds will only permit 20 to be chosen; sadder still, it has not the means of keeping incurable cases; but after a certain time, the poor idiot must return to his friends, or be thrown upon the world, excepting the few cases where so much good has been effected that the patient can earn his or her living by remaining as a servant in the asylum.

Everything in connection with the building has been arranged with the one grand view—an outward and imperceptible education of a weak mind. It is erected upon a commanding hill, from which the country is seen for miles, crowded with living and striking objects of everyday interest. The very commonest events, even the regular passing of the trains, assist the work of the teacher. They are gradually imprinted upon the memory, and a knowledge of them attained; and this natural teaching is the great basis upon which those who have charge of imbeciles build their hopes of overcoming the bad tendencies which are so generally the accompaniments of this great affliction.

The visitor to Earlswood is first conducted to a large reception-hall, round which hang drawings, &c., the work of the pupils, who, to judge them by these performances, can scarcely be believed to be idiots.

From a large handsome dining-room, you proceed to the play-rooms, arranged on what may be called a *graduated* principle, beginning with the most childish amusements, for new-comers, and advancing step by step until they arrive at the highest class. This system has an admirable effect; a degree of companionship is encouraged; and each room is placed under the charge of an attendant, who watches the slightest indication of interest, and is ready, by instantaneous attention, to keep alive the flickering spark; and thus the latent powers are stimulated into energy.

As the play-rooms are devoted to quiet games, there is a large room below for wet days; and here the dents in the ceiling give ocular evidence of the enthusiasm with which the favourite game of football is pursued.

Out of doors, there is a large gymnasium; and this is made a part of their education, as it seems the established rule to begin operations with the bodily faculties, combined, as I mentioned before, with common everyday scenes. The act of swinging a properly directed stroke with a bat, in fact, is an evidence of intellect, and must influence the mind; for there is mind in an imbecile, though clouded by a deranged organisation, combined with a feeble nervous system.

The next rooms, after those of the payment cases and the attendants, are the workshops, upon the same system as the play-rooms. In the first, the children learn the important lesson of sitting still, by picking cocoa-fibre for mats. This step is the most trying of all. Very few idiots can or will rest for a minute; and it requires great coaxing, and the inducement of some employment which strikes their fancy, to excite them to the trial. First, their interest is awakened; then the mind must exert itself in regulating the actions of the hand, the voluntary muscles of which have hitherto been inactive; and it is touching to watch the pride which they exhibit when they overcome this first difficulty.

The next step, after picking the fibre, is plaiting it; but this comes comparatively easy, as the fingers can now be controlled; and the work goes on with speed and regularity. The final appearance of the cocoa-fibre is in the form of coloured mats and hearth-rugs, which are made a profitable employment, as what are not used to supply the house are easily sold.

Then there are rooms for tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, and basket-makers; and as the visitor proceeds through these, he will find it difficult to realise the thought that these busy workers are of stinted mental endowment, were it not for the little eccentricities which occur every now and then in some word, noise, or movement.

So far, I have only spoken of the male department; the division appropriated to the girls is conducted upon exactly the same principle, varied only in consideration of their sex, and here, too, are the same touching scenes.

The school-rooms of both departments are equally similar; in both, the first requisite is order, which is established in spite of the seeming insuperable difficulties. Obedience is taught by firmness, combined with kindness, no punishment being permitted; and none but those who have experienced the task, can realise the amount of tact and sagacity it requires to gain the necessary influence which each teacher must possess. To teach an idiot, who has hitherto little or no power of articulation, to speak distinctly, and make use of the proper words to express his meaning, is a trying work, and can only be the result of extreme gentleness and patience. Great assistance is found in the use of models of animals, which are held up to be named. From this, if it is practicable, they are advanced to reading and writing, then to arithmetic, writing from dictation, and drawing; of the last, they are very fond. An anecdote is related of one of the boys who first attempted to draw upon his pocket-handkerchief; and upon this being noticed, and materials given, he advanced rapidly, until he became an excellent draughtsman, and can now dispose of his drawings at a good price. He has also shewn great skill in making the model of a man-of-war, every part of which is in just proportion, and strictly correct. It appears he had great difficulty in curving the planks; but at last found out that by boiling the wood he could render it pliable. The Queen was so much pleased with a drawing he presented to the Prince of Wales, that she sent him a present of two guineas, as pocket-money. The youth is still in the asylum, preferring its great security and comfort to facing the world. Poor fellow! in spite of the talent he displays in his trade, his imbecility shews itself in two ways—a total inability to understand the value of money, or to work by a scale. There is only one pupil that has been taught to work from a drawing.

It is a touching circumstance, that religious instruction makes a greater impression upon the patients than any other. A clergyman, the Rev. Edwin Sydney, writing upon the asylum, says: 'Every ray of light communicated to them seems to converge to this focus. I have never been more delighted than by their answers to questions on the simple narratives and plain truths of the gospel. In all that relates to the goodness of God in creation and redemption, the masters assert they shew a *feeling* far beyond what they exhibit on other topics.'

Out-of-door labour is also one of the modes employed in their education, and a farm of ninety acres is cultivated principally by the exertions of the patients. They weed, dig, drain, and pick off the stones, displaying great activity and diligence. They are particularly fond of the animals, and claim the sheep and lambs as their especial property.

In the kitchen-garden, little plots are given to the boys, and some of them are kept with great neatness and regularity of cropping. This garden contains seven acres, and is worked by nine pupil-gardeners, with the help of a little superintendence. While inspecting the rooms and grounds, many deeply interesting traits in the character of the poor inmates are communicated to the visitor, and he cannot fail to be struck with wonder at the strange caprices which nature exhibits in her handiwork. Some of the children are painfully deformed, whilst others are perfectly formed, and many really beautiful. Perhaps the most curious cases are the deaf and dumb, or dumb alone. One of the boys, who had never spoken, and was supposed to be dumb, became very ill, and while confined to his bed, suddenly exclaimed: 'Why do I suffer thus?' Another, who had been at the asylum for some time, and never made an attempt to articulate, began to sing a chant in the middle of the night, while he thought the others were asleep.

Dr Down, the superintendent, tells a curious story of one of his elder pupils, whom we had remarked in the shoemakers' room. His talent for historical facts is so great, that it is almost impossible to puzzle him; he is also an expert cook, and took his turn with the others in the kitchen. One day, on removing the dinner table-cloth, some one made a remark upon him: he looked very angry; and on being asked what he had said or done, in return replied: 'I said, sir, your peculiarity exceeds your beauty.'

No one who lives in the slightest degree among the people can fail to remember many a poor, ragged, passionate, or intemperate idiot, the sorrow and shame of his family, and the fear and ridicule of the neighbourhood, often ill treated, and always mis-treated. They go on from bad to worse, until, frequently enough, their misery is ended by a frightful death, or by some desperate act of their own. The experiment of alleviating this great sorrow has succeeded in France, Germany, Switzerland, and America; and we trust that it will not be permitted to fail only in wealthy England, and that through the want of funds.

MRS DEBORAH JONES UPON THINGS IN GENERAL.

My friend Jones, who shares the same chambers with myself, has lately returned from a visit to an aunt residing in the country. Some of the now-a-day puppies who lounge about our streets, parks, and parades, with their hands in their pockets—such pockets!—would consider a month's *tête-à-tête* with an elderly maiden relative to be a bore; but Jones, who wears neither moustaches nor peg-tops, is a quiet gentleman-like young man, who knows how to behave to his elders with that respect which is now so wofully out of fashion, and is consequently a favourite with his aunt, from whom he has considerable expectations.

Mrs Deborah Jones, it seems, holds decided and remarkable opinions on a variety of subjects, and my friend, who is a bit of a Boswell, made a practice during his visit of jotting down every evening a few of the more striking sentiments which had fallen from his aunt during the day.

When, on being called, we first took the chambers we now occupy, Jones and I agreed to have all things—tooth-brushes, and a beautifully coloured cutty belonging to me, only excepted—in common, so that I have not *stolen* these notes, which, now that everybody is clamorous for a new Reform Bill, now that statesmen are at their wits' end for political materials, I consider that it would be almost criminal to withhold from the public eye. Nor can their publication offend the lady, and so injure my friend's prospects in any way, for if she were to read her own opinions here, she could no more recognise her eloquent declamations in this concise and concentrated form, than the ghost of an ox, gazing into a pastrycook's, could tell that it was *his* tail that was stewed down in some basin of rich soup.

MY AUNT'S OPINIONS.

Ministers are all rogues, or else they would pay us more for money in the funds; the French pay 5 per cent., I hear, while ours only give 3; and yet people have the impudence to say that England is as rich a country as France! If it is, why, then, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be tried by a court-martial for not giving us at least 4 per cent. I do not ask too much; let him do that, and take off all the taxes, and I shall be content. How ignorant of you to ask how even 3 per cent. is to be paid without taxes to raise the money! Do you not know that there is a Mint, where government can make what money they like?

Or if there must be taxes, let them be levied on cigars and tobacco, and paper and books, all which things are of no real good to anybody; or let them be charged as high as you please on all foreign corn, and that will give our landed aristocracy a chance of looking up again.

Education is all fal-lal nonsense. I am sick to death of all this fuss about schools for the poor. It is all a conspiracy of those horrid democrats to set up the lower orders above the gentry. What is the use, I should like to know, of my cook and housemaid being so learned? Shall I have a cleaner door-step, or a better-dressed dinner, because they know that France is in Europe, and Turkey in—in—wherever it is? Enough for them to be able to read and write, ay, and too much too, for they spend half their time over penny-novels which make crime interesting; besides which, I have no doubt they write and receive love-letters; and they might be tempted some day to commit forgery; so you see how immoral learning is, though the clergy do encourage it. Schools indeed! I have no patience with them. Let the lower orders keep their places, and do what they are bid, and let their betters think for them.

England is going to rack and ruin fast. I declare the world is hardly a fit place now for a lady to live in; the manner in which the common people dress is perfectly disgraceful. When a lady buys a new collar, her maid takes the pattern, and works herself one exactly like it, and there are no means of punishing her. It is shameful. There *ought* to be a law to prevent vulgar folks from frequenting fashionable places bedizened out like their betters; and any minx daring to imitate her mistress's dress, should be well whipped at the cart's tail; but there are no statesmen now-a-days, and people do not know how to make just laws!

The blind folly of the age is pitiable. Surely it is clear enough that if the lower classes become as clever and learned as the upper, they will be less respectful and subservient, and consequently the gentry will lose dignity and social position. And yet it is the upper classes themselves who are cutting their own throats by trying all they can to elevate those beneath them. It is downright moral suicide; and all such people ought to be buried in four cross-roads.

The cancer has spread through all parts of the social body. Look at the people who are admitted into the peerage now-a-days—mere nobodies—men who are clever or learned, who have written histories or won victories, as if that kind of thing was of the slightest value compared with *blood!*

Then just see what sorts of people one meets in modern society—merchants, attorneys, apothecaries, chemists, music-masters, dealers in old bones (geologists, they call themselves), painters, writers of books! Ah! in the good old days, all such grubs were kept in their proper places! Was everything perfect then? Did we need no reforms forty years ago? you ask. Certainly we did. The sovereign should have had more power, and an unlimited income; the influence and privileges of the House of Lords should have been increased and extended; none but gentlemen should have been allowed to vote at elections; and no man should have been eligible for any public office unless he could prove that his family had been undefiled by trade for at least six generations. The wholesome discipline of the pillory, with its whippings and clippings, should have been kept hanging over the heads of the editors of newspapers, and such people, in case they should dare to talk about their betters, or find fault with the acts of government. The barriers separating different classes should have been strictly defined, and all intermarriage between them, or transfer from a lower to a higher, made illegal. All dissent from the doctrines of the Church of England should have been made penal. That is the sort of Reform Bill we *ought* to have had; then, perhaps, England might have become a great country, instead of growing more and more insignificant every year. Ah! we are a degenerate race; old suits of armour prove that our forefathers were at least twice as tall and strong as we are, and we know they lived to a much greater age. And as the world grows older, the decline is becoming more and more rapid. Even I can perceive a marked difference: the men are not so fine, nor the women so handsome, as they used to be when I was a girl. There are no musicians, no poets, no great actors, now-a-days. What can you expect from a wishy-washy set, who drink no wine to speak of, and who dare not fight duels! The duel!—when that went out of fashion, I knew for certain that gentlemanly feeling was extinct. People prefer now to libel one another in newspapers; there is less risk in that. Oh! I know very well that the practice of duelling cannot be defended by argument and reason; how should it, when it is all a matter of feeling? For a man to begin to argue about it, is the best proof that he has no delicacy of mind or sense of honour. How should such qualities survive that contact with the scum of the earth which is now universal: noble families intermarrying with shopkeepers for their wealth; men of birth and title engaging in commercial enterprises, and allowing their names to be printed at the head of prospectuses; sitting on trading-committees, and such like. Betting and cards are the only ways in which a gentleman can make money without soiling his hands. In my days, if a man of good birth wanted to increase his income, he went on the turf; and if he was unsuccessful, and very hard pressed, he cheated a little, which, though not strictly honourable, was better than turning tradesman; and what is the director of a wine-company but a tradesman?

Saddened by the contemplation of my ruined country, my heart would often turn for comfort to the church; but nothing is left us gentlefolks—nothing; even the consolations of religion are denied us. I declare that there is hardly a church I can go to; all the good old pews pulled down—open seats everywhere—no apparent distinction. It is shocking. The high pew, with its comfortable cushions, was like a little private chapel, as it were, where one was distinct from the vulgar, and all this was far more favourable to devotion; besides, the difference taught the poor humility, which is an essential part of their religious duty. And what return have we got for all this truckling to the mob? Do they come to church better? Are there fewer dissenting chapels than there were? Horrid places! And the law allows them to be open publicly, while it makes ever such a fuss about a few gaming-houses. Pretty law-makers we have!

But if our nobility and gentry really cared for religion, as they used to do, they would take the law into their own hands, and soon put down the conventicles. If they only made it a rule never to employ any tradesman or labourer who was a Baptist, Atheist, Methodist, Papist, or anything of that sort, we should soon see a difference. But I do believe people are all infidels now! Your liberals and philanthropists are not content with spoiling all our servants, and dragging everything worthy of respect through the mire, that the rabble may appear less dirty by the contrast; they must needs patronise the rogues! Yes, thieves and pickpockets are to be treated with even greater care and tenderness than the 'honest poor' they cant so much about. It seems, forsooth, that it is *our* fault if children grow up as outcasts of society; that it is our duty to pick the grubby little vermin out of the streets, and bring them up to some honest employment! A pretty story, as if roguery was not their very nature! No; my idea is, that all the lower orders are bad alike; only a good many are too stupid to know how to be dishonest, without being found out; but all the sharp-witted ones are thieves; and so, by education and training, you will just quicken the brains of the poor, and so increase the number of rogues, and, at the same time, make them more dangerous.

If you want to check crime, you should increase the severity of punishment. Does it not stand to reason, that if you hang a man for his first offence, he will not commit a second?

But the fact is, politicians of late years have taken up a plan of courting the 'people;' and as the sympathies of the masses are always enlisted on the side of criminals, they began first by abolishing the punishment of death for theft and forgery; and they have gone on making the penalties for all crimes lighter and lighter, until now, the prisons being so comfortable, people break the law in order to be put in them; the natural consequence of all this is, that the papers are full of nothing but murders, burglaries, forgeries, and such things; and there is double the crime there was when I was a girl, though the country is much poorer, and the population diminished. Don't talk to me of statistics—a pack of stories made out by ministers to prove themselves in the right!

There is one consolation—all this sort of thing must come to an end ere long: the impiety of the age has reached such a frightful pitch, that something must happen to somebody somewhere soon. Vaccination was bad enough: to dare to supplant a disease intended for man by a milder one meant for cows, was bold and impious; to endeavour to get rid of part of the curse by using chloroform to deaden the pain we are intended to suffer, was a still more fearful act of rebellion against the decrees of Providence; but to seize upon the dread Lightning, and make it carry messages backward and forward about stocks and cottons, is an act too horrible and wicked to meet with impunity.

And what was the comet, I should like to know, but a warning?

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

I WAS not very much surprised to receive, one morning, a letter from my niece, Mrs Lorimer, although she had never written to me since her marriage—nearly four years ago—nor did the contents of her letter excite much astonishment in my mind, different as it was from the undeviating accounts I had always received of her happiness and prosperity. I was unspeakably grieved, to be sure; but I had always had my doubts about the sincerity of her protestations, for I knew the vain, proud heart of the girl, and that to own herself disappointed, would seem to her humiliation and defeat.

I did not overlook the remembrance that her sisters had visited her, and brought back glowing accounts of her felicity; but, then, a fine house and large establishment made up their estimate of a happy marriage; and so long as everything seemed smooth and courteous between the pair, they would never look further or deeper. Howbeit, here was Isabel's counter-statement:

'Dear Aunt Sarah,' ran the letter, 'will you leave home, and come and stay with us for a time? The house is quiet; the summer is in its glory; and it will be such a pleasure to me. Do come in spite of obstacles, for I am unhappy, and want to consult you. To whom else can I look?'

So, though I felt it rather hard to leave my pretty cottage and flower-garden, at the pleasantest season of the year, and still more so, to break off my old ways and habits of life, which fitted me there like a glove, I resolved to lose no time in obeying Isabel's summons, for I was very anxious about her. I thought some conjugal crisis must have occurred, or she would never have dropped the veil. I knew Mr Lorimer so slightly that I had little ground for speculation, so far as he was personally concerned; but I knew that Isabel had married—from *respect*, she said; and I could not help remembering how, even with the solemn nuptial vows in her ear, and enunciated, too, with a tremulous passion, she had turned her graceful head from altar and priest to mark the ample flow of her satin drapery and costly veil. Some might have called it a charming *naïveté;* but it did not seem so to me, nor was I one of those who fondled and praised her—her husband among the rest—for the clear calm tones in which she had spoken her own responses. I did not like it; there was depth enough in Isabel's nature to have made her forget her bridal-suit, and to have stifled in whispers her bell-like voice, had her heart been true to her words. When I looked from her husband's flushed face and eyes, which glowed when they fell upon her, to her cool cheek and smiling lips, I made an old woman's inward augury of ill: 'Hot love soon grows cold,' said I to myself; 'and she, poor child, is not in love at all. God grant the flame may never break out of bounds!' To speak truly, the last was my present fear. I was not afraid of any outward compromise of Isabel's duty, for I relied upon the self-restraint of her character and her pride of position; but had she discovered that she was capable of loving as she never had loved, and that the object of that love was not her husband?—that a blessedness once possible, was now in sight, but out of reach for ever?

Then, again, came back the consolatory reflection, that she would never have owned it; pride and shame would have sent her silent to the grave; and my heart ached involuntarily as I conceived that burning grief devouring her in secret.

At all events, I would go. The very same day I received Isabel's letter saw my arrangements complete; and the evening post carried her a letter stating at what hour they might send to meet me at their railway station. Then I put on my bonnet, and made the best of my way to the city, to tell her family of my visit, and receive their commissions.

It was a sultry evening in the beginning of July, and the heat, dust, and turmoil of the metropolis struck me oppressively. The cross of St Paul's flamed in the rays of the blazing sun; the gay display of summer fashions in the adjacent windows looked tawdry and eclipsed in the unmitigated light; and one put by, half in pity, half in disgust, the drooping, scentless roses thrust upon the attention by the importunate flower-girls. I found my brother's warehouse in full activity; he himself was paying commercial court to some important customer in one of the long narrow alleys formed by bales of goods, which fronted the public door by which I had entered. He saw me at once, and directed me to await his leisure in his private counting-house with an air of undisguised astonishment at my appearance. When he joined me, I told him briefly why I had come, for it was long since Robert and I had been on affectionate terms. He appeared highly amused at the idea of my going to Morton Leas.

'Why, what can Isabel want with you, Sarah—a quiet, dull, old soul like you? No offence, I hope; but you must wonder yourself; besides, you will be like a fish out of water in their grand house and with their fine ways. You have no notion of the style they live in?'

I said quietly: 'If I had not, it was from no want of information on the subject, and that I had every confidence that I should not commit myself in his daughter's house;' and then I went up stairs to see her sisters.

It was the same story over again—unbounded surprise and witless conjecture. I had to listen for the hundredth time to a recital of 'how things were done at Morton Leas,' and they seemed to share their father's apprehension that I should find this splendour quite too much for me. As they had no instructions to give beyond an entreaty to write and tell them 'how it all struck me at first sight, and how I got on with Mr Lorimer,' I was soon back again on my homeward way.

How it all struck me at first sight I well remember! A heavy storm in the morning had cooled the air and laid the dust, and after the restraint of my journey, I enjoyed keenly the unaccustomed luxury of reclining at my ease in a luxurious carriage as it rolled rapidly over well-kept roads through the noble fir-plantations I had heard were Mr Lorimer's especial pride. How exquisitely the slender spires of the trees stood out against the roseate amber of the sky; how gratefully the eye rested on their stately layers of green shade! Now a squirrel darted into momentary view, which was a charming vision to my citizen-sight, as were also the mercurial rabbits that at every point appeared and vanished with incredible swiftness.

'You can see the house now, ma'am, through the trees,' said the coachman, civilly turning round to indicate it. I could, and a grand old place it seemed to me—grander even than my tutored expectations. I don't know in what style or of what date it was; its ample front looked to me like the façade of a Greek temple, only the Portland stone was reddened with age, and was almost covered with a dense but close-cut growth of ivy, intermingling with the graceful festoons of the Virginia creeper. On the broad terrace on which the front opened, I recognised the figures of my host and hostess, which so occupied and excited my mind, that I received but a very general impression of any other external object.

I was just conscious of green lawn stretching its velvet plain beyond my range of sight—of an antique flower-garden glowing with vivid dyes, and breathing a perfume exquisitely sweet and delicate—of the park beyond the distant fence, and the deer peeping timidly between the slender rails.

I could not help the reflection that Mr Lorimer's mercantile connection must indeed be on a colossal and remunerative scale, to have permitted him in early life to make himself the possessor of so fine an estate.

I was so eager to get my first glimpse of Isabel, that I was on the point of overlooking the courtesy of my host, who came down the steps to hand me from the carriage. He spoke to me so kindly that I wondered at my former impression of his coldness and stiffness.

'I am so truly pleased to see you here at last,' he said; 'and so, you may be sure, is Isabel.' Silly old woman as I was, I was looking out for some indication how matters stood between them, and I fancied I could detect a change from the cordiality of his tone the moment he mentioned his wife's name. He led me up to where she stood smiling to receive me, and placed my hand in hers. 'I hope,' he added, 'you will be able to enjoy yourself with us;' and then, as if he considered his duty done, he turned, and went into the house. He had not looked at Isabel as he spoke, or he could not have failed to have seen in her eyes a wistful expression, which touched me deeply, for it seemed to plead for his notice; and he went away without a word, which surely would not have been the case if cordiality and affection subsisted between them.

I turned and gazed at Isabel, who stood watching me attentively, and still holding my hand in hers precisely as her husband had placed it. 'Why, child, how beautiful you have grown!' I said, involuntarily: 'and how stately stands the queen of this fair demesne! What! not a word or a kiss for the old aunt-mother?' In a moment, her lovely arms were round my neck, and she was showering kisses upon me. I was affected by the convulsive pressure of her embrace, and the speechlessness of her emotion, and I tried to release myself playfully. 'Just as of old, reckless of finery!' I said. 'Alas! for my new cloak and bonnet. Take me up stairs, my dear, and shew me the children.' Thereupon, suddenly composed, she drew out from behind her, with a charming gesture, a pretty snow-drop of a child, who had been clinging timidly to her dress, amidst the ample folds of which she had hitherto been effectually concealed.

'Here is one of my darlings: Lily I call her, because she is so white. The other is asleep. But come; I keep you standing; we will shew Aunt Sarah her room.' She caught up the child in her arms—lithe and tall, the weight seemed of no account to her—and preceded me up stairs with such a firm yet light step that I followed her movements with admiration. How the promise of the girl had fulfilled itself in the woman! She had always been exquisitely pretty, but her beauty seemed to me to have a higher character now. She had quite recovered her composure, and, staying with me while I dressed for dinner, asked me a hundred questions concerning her old home and family. I could see she was afraid of my taking the initiative, but I had no idea of being so premature.

The reader of an old woman's story will readily excuse all superfluous detail. I must not describe trifles with the minuteness of a three-volumed novel. Suffice it, all around me proved that wealth and good taste had combined to give my Isabel a home that should have been an elysium; and that before the first dinner-hour was over, I was convinced that Mr Lorimer had survived his love for his wife, and regarded her no longer but as an elegant appendage to his house and table. I saw, too, that Isabel was miserable beneath her cold and indifferent demeanour (good Heavens! how every trace of the impulsive, self-confident girl seemed vanished); but the cause of the husband's coldness and the wife's disappointment I could not guess. With whom lay the blame? We were not alone at the table. I found that Mrs Vivian, Mr Lorimer's only sister, was a guest as well as myself. This lady did not please me at all; her manners were at once haughty and careless, and it almost seemed to me that in her attentive solicitude for her brother, to whom all her conversation was addressed, and her measured civilities to Isabel, there was a lurking insult to the latter which must inevitably make itself felt. Mr Lorimer himself was an admirable host, so kind and skilful in his kindness, that even I, predisposed to nervous shyness of him, soon felt at ease. Nor must it be supposed that there was any failure of outward respect towards his wife: he never avoided addressing her or referring to her opinion whenever it was natural to do so; but it was the averted or chilling look, the tones untouched by an accent of tenderness, from which I drew my conclusions. How different from the wedding-morning! thought I; ay, one part of the prophecy was fulfilled—the hot love was cold enough now.

I was very glad when dinner was over, and we rose to retire to the drawing-room, and still more so when Mrs Vivian announced that she was under the painful necessity of leaving us for an hour or so, to make arrangements for her departure on the morrow.

I was very anxious now to question Isabel, but I found such was not her present intention.

'Let us go to the nursery,' she said; 'I always see the babies put to bed.'

However, when we reached the nursery, we found the children asleep, for dinner had been later on my account, and the nurse was rigorous about extinguishing them at the appointed hour. I had feared Isabel would have been a careless mother; but as I watched her leaning over her babes, the tears gathering in her eyes as she gazed at them, I felt ashamed of my involuntary injustice. The baby lay in her bassinet—which was in that state of high toilet common now-a-days to those charming receptacles—with its cherub face flushed in healthy sleep, and one fat rosy fist pushed against the tiny mouth. Lily, in her little white bed, pale and motionless, looked like some lovely piece of monumental sculpture. I saw some deep passionate feeling was welling-up in Isabel's heart as she stood by her side, and presently turning from her, she dismissed the servants down stairs, saying to me, in a forced tone of carelessness: 'You and I, dear aunt, will keep watch for a little while. I like sometimes to spend a quiet hour with them thus.'

We were hardly alone before her self-command gave way; she sank on her knees by the child's couch, and stifled sobs shook her from head to foot. I went gently up to her, and stroked the bowed head without speaking. My heart bled for her; I felt how bitter was the long suppressed anguish that was now finding vent.

'Come, dear child,' I said, 'let us sit down in this window-seat, and talk your troubles over. I am sure they are not irremediable.'

She lifted up her wet pale face with a bitter smile. 'I have but one trouble, and you have discovered it already—my husband does not love me!'

I saw she watched me feverishly, in half hope of a disclaimer, but I could not give it.

'There is some quarrel between you,' I began soothingly—'some temporary alienation;' but she interrupted me decisively.

'Not so, Aunt Sarah—not so! It is confirmed indifference, the result, he would tell you, of my own heartlessness—hopeless indifference, for it is the hard cold of former heat!'

'Poor Isabel!' I said, 'and you love him now?'

She stooped down and kissed Lily with concentrated passion. 'I would give this child of my heart to win back my husband,' was the answer. 'I would consent to lay her in her grave, if over that grave he would look as he used to look, and speak to me as he once spoke.'

But I must not go over every spoken word, but tell in brief what Isabel told me in vehement detail. It may be other young wives may learn a caution from it.

She had married with a very superficial knowledge of her husband's character, after a brief acquaintance. He courted her from a position considerably higher than her own, which dazzled her ambition, added to which he was passionately in love with her, and worshipped at her footstool. It was a dangerous incense he offered. Isabel had many fine qualities, but her education had been unfortunate; she had always been greatly flattered and indulged in her own circle, and she took her lover's devotion as a matter of course, accepting as her right all his lavish liberality, and seeming to take it for granted that nothing more was required of her than to be the gracious recipient of the tribute offered. Worse than all, she married without love, yet deceiving Mr Lorimer with the impression that she loved him. I rather think she deceived herself, saying she had a great respect for him; that she loved him, she supposed, as much as she could love any man. Poor girl, vain, selfish, and ignorant of the world, she was weak enough to estimate her surrender at the exaggerated price her lover put upon it, and to believe the glamour would last!

But men soon wake up from these illusions; it is only for a time that a husband can deceive himself that he is loved, unless the wife be a consummate hypocrite, or he an uxorious fool. Mr Lorimer continued to adore his beautiful young wife, until the first blindness of passion having cleared away, he began to perceive she was exacting and unresponsive.

'You cannot believe,' said Isabel, 'with what insane arrogance I acted. To be the supreme consideration, for my will to take precedence of his, was what I had expected and claimed, and it never occurred to me to feel grateful for his indulgence or to wonder at his forbearance; moreover, I did not love him then, and I began to weary of his attentions, to sicken of his perpetual companionship. I suppose I scarcely tried to hide my impatience, for I was so besotted, that I believed he must always love me.

'About this time, his sister, Mrs Vivian, came first to stay with us, and I doubt not she stimulated her brother's awakening. Besides, Maurice is a proud man, with a sufficient sense of his own excellence and eligibility; and it was impossible for him, when he began to reflect, not to consider how much he had bestowed upon me, and that I had not even paid him with my love! I don't know how it was I was blind to the gradual change in my husband's manner, oblivious of the influence which was working against my happiness; but it was so. It was over Lily's cradle that I first awoke to a consciousness of my position. It had been a great disappointment to both of us that she was a girl, to me, I think, especially. One day, I was bewailing her sex very weakly, and felt surprised that he did not join in the lamentation.

'Are not you disappointed too?' I asked.

'Yes,' he said coldly; 'but my disappointment is irrecoverable, and dates further back. Try and love your baby Isabel, if you can.'

'These words fell upon me like a thunder-bolt: I suddenly saw my whole conduct in its true light and in all its consequences: but it was too late! From the moment I was forced to realise the idea that he had ceased to love me, I received a vivid conviction of the value of his love. I came down from my bedroom to find him, as you see him now, coldly considerate, punctiliously attentive; but he no longer sought my society, or welcomed my coming with smiles.

'I cannot tell you the effect this change had upon my wayward heart: besides, it seemed dreadful not to be loved by one's husband. In my turn I began to love him passionately, to wait upon his words, to court his attention, even to solicit his endearments, for his coldness maddened me. Perhaps I might have succeeded if we had been left alone; but Caroline Vivian was always with us. Her presence and influence ruined everything. Previously, she had seen my husband's devotion and my neglect at their full, and no doubt all she had said to him then of his blindness and my worthlessness, was bearing now its abundant fruit. I could not endure her to see how our position was reversed and what I was suffering. I could not bear for her to see me rejected: and during the months she stayed with us, I tried to act my former part as closely as possible. So mad was I in my false pride, that I have sacrificed the happiness of all my life to it. I succeeded so well in this miserable game, that I deceived both him and her. I left them constantly to their own society, while I was thirsting for one hour of his. I rode, drove, visited, according to my own convenience and leisure. I consulted my husband's inclinations less than in former times. I justly laid myself open to Caroline's interference and reproaches, but I would not bear them. Violent scenes followed, until Maurice himself silenced her. He wanted no champion of his happiness, he said; expostulation and reproach would not transform my nature, or give him the wife he had expected—no third person could lighten the lot he had to bear. The night Caroline went away, I threw myself at his feet—I besought him to love me—to believe that I loved him. Men are not impulsive, inconsistent, demonstrative, like us, and he could not understand such conduct. He called it caprice, policy, hypocrisy—said I had worn out his regard; reminded me of this and that—careless words, selfish actions, which I had forgotten, but he had brooded over in silent bitterness and disappointment. Alas! alas! how black the catalogue appeared!

'The tale is nearly told out, Aunt Sarah. Since then, things have gone on worse and worse. His propriety and coldness have been always the same, while my conduct has been actuated by passion, grief, and resentment, perpetually at strife. By turns, I am neglectful and disdainful, reproachful and imploring. I love him now as he never loved me. His patience and temperance appear to me admirable in the midst of my misery, for the uncertainty of my temper, and the discomfort of our relations, embitter his life. Caroline has been once more our guest for the last week or two; and perhaps now her presence does good, for it forces me to a measure of quiet and consistency.

'To-morrow, my husband leaves me for Glasgow on important affairs. I half think everything is not going right in his business connection, but he never talks on the subject, only he looks harassed beyond his wont. He said he might be a month or two absent; and so, Aunt Sarah, as my misery was getting intolerable, I thought I would send for you. Now, what comfort have you to give me?'

Poor Isabel! I could but clasp her in my arms and try to soothe her by my affection. What chance was had of repairing the happiness she had so recklessly squandered, I felt very incompetent to decide, owing to my slight knowledge of Mr Lorimer's character, and his immediate departure would preclude the possibility of my forming a judgment. 'But, my dearest child,' I argued, 'one thing appears to me absolutely certain, that a man like your husband, with quick perceptions and sensibility, can never resist the influence of your love and duty, if you will but try and regulate their exercise. You must earn his respect, ere you win his affection, and time will give you the victory. Prove yourself worthy to be loved, Isabel, and he will love you.'

'I cannot wait,' said Isabel, clasping her hands; 'I want it at once—to-morrow—now! I shall never win it on my system. But it grows dark, dear aunt: we must go down stairs. Come with me to my dressing-room till I can find nerve and composure to meet him again.'

COBWEBS AND FLIES.

To an ordinary man without diseased nerves, a spider is—just a spider: not peculiarly enchanting to the sight, and disagreeable enough to the touch when running over the skin with those eight long hairy legs of his, emblematic of slatternliness, and significant of a mistress as careless as her maids, when found in the house-passages or room-corners, and with a bad domestic character generally, because of his art and act of cobweb-making; but with no more terrible associations than these, and of decidedly feeble powers of aggression. To a fly, a gnat, a small beetle, a tiny moth, nay, in some instances, even to bees and wasps, and in the far-off tropics, to humming-birds, and the like, a spider is an established murderer—the licensed Jack Ketch, the unpunished giant and universal Bogie of fly-nature. His hooks and traps, his springs and claws, his poison-bags and fangs, his cruel cords, his nets, his blind-alleys, his funnel-shaped prisons, his patterned mazes, with the wicked bird-lime on the walks, his hideous jaws and bloated frame, are all of horrid power and still more horrid uses.

First, there is the web, composed of threads of two qualities, and of a duplex purpose. The one is a simple cordage, made of many strands; the other, a rope made also of many strands, but studded with drops of viscid glue. It is this last kind alone which has the power of binding any unfortunate creature that may come in the way. A spirited fly or an energetic beetle would snap the simple cordage as easily as Samson burst the bonds of the Philistines; but when the clammy viscid lines have been wound round and round him, the poor insect is as helpless as any Egyptian mummy in his papyrus casings. In the webs of the geometric or garden-spiders, the mooring-cables and radii are made of the simple threads; the concentric or spiral circles, of the viscid; and these alone detain the vagrant flies that accidentally touch the net. The weaving house-spiders have no clammy threads, but entangle their prey by the gauzy fineness of the web, into which the claws and feet of the house-fly catch, and cannot be withdrawn. Swathed and bound, glued to the strands, or entangled in a net, and utterly helpless, the doomed fly next beholds a terrible creature advancing swiftly towards him; protruding from his head are two huge stiff clasp-knives, drawn from their cases, standing erect, and ready to strike. These clasp-knives, or, more properly, fangs, are hollow, and cut off at the end, to afford free passage to the poisonous acid secreted in them. Their stroke is deadly; but if, by some rare chance, they failed to reach a vital part, the poison would perfect the work. The spider rushes ferociously on his victim, fangs or clasp-knives extended, and without more ado, plunges them with a downward stroke into head or breast, in true melodramatic style, then pours out his poison, and all is done. That this poison is an acid, is proved by the reddening of litmus-paper, so far as the perforations extend; that it is deadly, we have only to watch the next murder that takes place in the webs floating through the sweet brier-bushes near the garden-chair. Spiders do not use these weapons against their victims or their prey only, but even against each other, when moved by either rage or jealousy. Leeuwenhoeck watched two large fellows fighting desperately one day; they stabbed and struck till one fell dead, literally bathed in blood from his many wounds—wet as if water had been poured over him. The naturalist was not initiated into the cause of the quarrel; but it was a deadly one, and terribly suggestive of human parallels.

The claws of the spider are combed and horny, serrated like the teeth of a comb; and the legs are covered with stiff spines, which, if a false step should be made, catch in the threads, and prevent a heavy fall. With these combed claws and spiny legs, the spider guides the threads of his web, separating them into two ropes, if he would have them separated into two; or keeping them all glued together into one, if that should be his object for the moment. Of spinnerets, there are three pair set close together, each looking, under the microscope, not unlike the head of a barrel covered with black hairs, and beset with a circle of stiff whitish bristles. The whole flat surface of this barrel-head within the circle is covered with very minute horny tubes, which are the outlets of the silk ducts. These vary much in individuals. In the garden-spider (*epeira*), above one thousand of such ducts were counted; in a *clubiona*, only three hundred; but the greatest diversity is among those same geometric or garden-spiders, of whose family there are many members more or less unlike. Each thread is composed of as many strands as there are spinnerets devoted to that particular kind of thread; for, as we have seen, there are varieties of thread, and varieties of spinnerets are *à posteriori* matters of course. When the thread first issues from the spider, it is like a line of the thinnest possible gum-arabic, which hardens as it issues; but the glutinous threads, with those little pearly drops of viscid glue on them, never harden. They spoil, however, sooner than the others, and must often be renewed. They are very numerous; 87,360 having been counted in the net of a garden-spider, of average size—120,000 in a large net of from fourteen to sixteen inches in diameter. Yet such a net can be made in three-quarters of an hour, while the accidents to be repaired and decayed strands to be renewed are endless. One species (*Clubiona atrox*) is an immensely good housewife in this way, and is perpetually renewing part of her habitation and outworks. She catches her prey, not from any viscidity or gumming in her threads, but, like the house-spider, by the extreme fineness of her net, which entangles the legs and feet of the curious creatures who come prowling too near her domain. But though she has no glue-thread, like so many others, she has two kinds of thread as well as the rest: one, the ordinary spider's thread; the other, a pale blue zigzag thread of complicated structure, which is attached to the rest in loops or fasciculi, extremely fatal to flies by entangling with their external inequalities.

As spiders make various kinds of webs, so do they live in all sorts of houses; indeed, there is as much difference between these as there is between a Gothic castle and an Italian villa, between a Swiss *châlet* and a wigwam in Tierra del Fuego. Some, the *Latebricolæ*, who hide in holes and fissures, furnish their subterranean burrows with a silken lining, manufacturing also a close-fitting door of cemented earth, which they line with the same silken tapestry as that hung round the walls, and which, falling down by its own weight, can be kept close shut by means of strong stays and ropes. In the Brazilian forests may be found a pretty little spider belonging to this group (*Mygale cementaria*), which makes a case for itself, which it suspends in the middle of its web, hanging to it the most admirable spring-door imaginable. Others of the same species are enormous fellows; one, the *Mygale avicularia*, at least two inches long, and with feet that measure a full foot from point to point of the standing-place. This enormous creature is said, by some naturalists, to eat humming-birds, but others again assert that it does not do so, and that when one has been placed in its hole, it has run away and hidden itself. Then there are the *tubicolæ*, who live at the bottom of silken tubes, whence they spy out for their prey as it passes humming near the cruel cave. There are the *cellicicolæ*, who dwell in small cells, hermit like; the *cursores*, who run to catch their prey, like the wolf-spider; the *lycosus*, who hides under clods of earth, then darts out with the ferocity and swiftness of its four-footed namesake, and devours its victim with disgusting avidity; there are the *saltatores*, who spring to seize their prey; and the *laterigradæ*, who run or walk sideways or backwards—anything but straightforwardly—after theirs, occasionally throwing out long threads to trip up the unwary. There are the *filitelæ*, who spread long floating silken threads about the places where they prowl; the *tapitelæ*, who spin thick webs like hammock-cloths; the *orbitelæ*, who weave webs of regular and open texture, like the garden-spiders, the *epeiræ*; the *retitelæ*, who make an irregular open mesh-work, like the house-spider; and lastly, there are the *aquitelæ*, who swim in the water, and cast out silky filaments to entrap their prey. One was actually seen in the fens of Norfolk on a raft of its own making. This was a ball of weeds of about three inches in diameter, and probably kept together by means of strong silken cords; and on this raft sat the nautical Raw-head and Bloody Bones of that pond, rushing down into the water whenever he saw a drowned or drowning insect, and dragging the body up on his raft, to devour it at his ease and leisure. Some roll themselves up in the leaves of plants and flowers; others lurk behind stones, or in holes and under loosened bark; others, again, hide in the calyx of dead flowers, and thence spring out upon such flies as come in search of honey; and one, the *Aranea arundinacea*, buries itself in the thick panicle of a reed, and then pounces out on anything that comes within reach. A white species lives in the blossoms of the hawthorn, or on some of the umbelliferous plants, and so escapes detection, owing to the sameness of hue; and, indeed, it is most common to find spiders coloured exactly like the flowers wherein they have fixed their residence.

Now, all these creatures are variously formed in the matter of eyes and vision—fashioned according to their uses and the law of adaptation. Their six or eight eyes, like solid globes of diamond sunk into black velvet, are arranged to suit their habits and style of dwelling-place. In such as live in holes and tubes, they are all clustered together on the forepart of the head, as would be natural to gloomy-minded robbers for ever watching through loopholes and narrow fissures. The wandering tribes have them much more spread, and with wider movements; while with some, who need to see very clearly and very far, they are set on slight prominences, which give them a still freer axis. The nocturnal species have no dark pigment behind the eye, as all the rest have, but are, instead, furnished with a curtain, which gives a bright metallic lustre, and shines in the dark like the eyes of cats and lions.

Not much good has ever been done with cobwebs; sundry attempts, we believe, have been made to render them available for textile purposes, but none have as yet fructified into success. The silk has been found to be too infinitely attenuated to be of much service in the loom, though a ball-dress of real cobweb would certainly be the great millinery attraction of the evening. Sick people and hipped people, who are always fancying strange things, have chosen to fancy cobweb-pills before now; and a friend of the present writer's was in the habit of taking immense numbers of these horrible-looking pills, made of the webs of the house-spider! There was not much effect therefrom, so far as the outside world could judge, as the poor gentleman soon fell a victim to his infirmities.

Spiders, though so frightfully ferocious, are capable of some of the 'tender feelings' common to animated nature in general. Deadliest enemies, they are also the most impassioned mothers. The wolf-spider, of hateful memory, will allow herself to be torn limb from limb, rather than tamely give up the bag of eggs which she carries behind her; nay, she has even braved the terrors of the ant-lion, and has remained a willing captive in his den, because her cherished bag was there, and her young embryos under process of consumption by their appropriators. Spiders' eggs are at first flat and soft, then are formed into globules by the air, much in the same way as quicksilver runs into drops. The egg-nest is a half-sphere made of silk, then heaped up with eggs ranged carefully and methodically in an oval; over these, the second half of the egg-nest is woven, as a lid, and behold the spherical nest complete—a monster ball quite as large as a pea, with a multitude of little balls inside! It is like the immense Easter sugar-egg which is sent out every year, bearing beneath its huge vaults a world of smaller sugar-eggs, for the delectation of countless young.

The idea of the spider naturally brings with it the idea of the fly. The two are united in bonds as indissoluble, if not so loving, as those which bound together the twin heroes of Sparta. Where the one is, there will be found the other; a natural sequence unvarying and profoundly logical —a piece of nature's own political economy—a practical treatise on the connection between supply and demand. Flies are curious little creatures; bold and timid, dainty and voracious, useful and annoying, they are at once a blessing and a plague to man —preventing corruption, but destroying his gilded frames; clearing the air, but spotting his window-panes. In the bright summer mornings, too, when they buzz over the sleeping face, and let down their long proboscis into the relaxed pores of the warm, moist skin, they are sufficiently disagreeable; and no thought of all the good he has done out in the fields, and lanes, and streets can awaken the smallest sentiment of gratitude, or weaken in the faintest degree the enmity which one feels towards that winged monster who is robbing us of our matutinal slumbers.

The first thing to be considered in a fly—say, the common house-fly (*Musca domestica*)—is its head; for in its head and feet lie almost all the chief points of the interest and mystery of its structure. Under the microscope you see, in front of its forehead, a pair of short antennæ or feelers, composed of six joints, the third of which is dilated and much larger than the rest; while the sixth is covered with an arborescent tuft of bristles, and is termed a plumose joint. The function of this plumose joint seems to be that of protecting the third from any injury, dust, or rough winds; for when at rest these antennæ fold up and inward, lying in a depression in the fly's head; but the plumose joint protrudes like a brush, and keeps off all such harm as it may. With a high magnifying power, the dilated and enlarged third joint is found to be covered with minute sacs or ducts bearing short, fine hairs, the use of which is not yet understood. Some naturalists make the antennæ organs of hearing; others, of sound; others, of feeling, and so on: the truth is, very little is absolutely known yet about the more delicate parts of insect organisation, and conjecture must not be allowed to solidify into assertion. The eyes of flies have long been stock-pieces of wonderment. Two compound eyes of large dimensions, cut into four thousand convex facets—each facet or lens a perfect organ of vision—and three smaller eyes, of simple structure, placed in a triangle between the two compound eyes, afford ample space for any amount of wonderment. But here, again, we have only conjecture and hypothesis to help us on. It is supposed that one set of eyes reflects distant, the other set near, objects; but this idea has not been proved or worked out in any satisfactory manner as yet, though we never know when a burst of microscopic revelation may not come upon the benighted world. With eight thousand and three perfect organs of vision, of all living creatures the fly ought to be least liable to be 'taken in!'

The wings are made of two membranes, both transparent, and between which blood-vessels and air-tubes ramify, forming a beautiful net-work, over which these diaphanous membranes are stretched. A common house-fly makes six hundred strokes with its wings, and goes five feet every second; if alarmed, it can go from thirty to thirty-five feet a second. The number of vibrations made was discovered in a very ingenious manner. All swift successive sounds combine into a musical note, that changes its pitch according as the vibrations increase or diminish. The buzzing of the fly is also a musical note; and an instrument has been made, 'wherein a multiplying wheel, with a given number of cogs, against which a spring strikes, is made to revolve rapidly,' and thus produce a note, which is set in unison with that made by the fly's wings. By these simple means it is easily ascertained what number of vibrations the wings have made, by the number of revolutions necessary to obtain a note of the same musical pitch. The vibrations of the wings of the common gnat are computed at many thousands a second; but *Musca domestica* satisfies herself, as we have seen, with six hundred only.

We come now to the foot, which has been so long a vexed question among naturalists, so long the battle-field of all sorts of opposing theories. First, a fly's foot was an exhausted receiver or sucking-pump, and held on to glass and other smooth things against gravity and Newton's apple by reason of atmospheric pressure; then it was a self-acting glue-pot, and at each step gave out a dab of glue or gum which fastened it, like a Nuremberg cow, with all six legs well gummed down; then it was an assemblage of grappling-irons, which hooked on to all the small inequalities to be found even in glass or marble; and now, it is a compromise of all these modes and theories; which is perhaps the safest kind of thing to make, when treating of natural history and microscopic revelations. In the first place, we see—always under the microscope—two movable claws, like cows' horns, by which the fly can hook himself on to any microscopic rocks or ledges that may present themselves; then we see a pair of pads, shaped not unlike the head of a battledore, and which pads were supposed to be the suckers imitated by Hervio Nano when he walked across the ceiling of the theatre, but are now found to be simple cushions for the cows'-horn claws. These pads are covered with innumerable hairs, and at the extremity of each hair is a minute drop of fluid, which gave rise to the glue-pot theory.

But these little hairs are now supposed to be so many tiny sucking-discs, which last supposition unites all the varying forms of faith into one comprehensive and harmonious whole. Claws for catching hold, pads for the protection of those claws, and to preserve them from abrasion, as with cats and lions, tigers and pumas; and a countless number of sucking-discs and glue-pots conjoined—surely the most fastidious could not wish for more concessions than these, which, unlike concessions in general, receive and enlarge, not reject or retract. Flies die of a very singular disease: they are attacked by a kind of fungus, which perhaps will be found by future investigators to be a living parasite; and when they die of this disease, they are found in exactly the attitude of life, but surrounded by a halo, of about an inch in diameter, formed of a whitish dust, consisting of the spores or seeds of a fungus. In this disease, the fungus grows out from between the rings of the abdomen, pushing them apart, while it protrudes in large white prominent zones, growing rank and high. The insect is completely dry and friable, crumbling to dust if touched; and further examination shews 'that the whole of the contents of the body of the fly have been consumed by the parasitic growth, and that nothing remains but an empty shell, lined with a thin felt-like layer, composed of the slender mycelia of the innumerable fungi.'

The direct and collateral progeny of a female fly, in her one brief season, has been estimated at over two millions according to Keller, but other naturalists make it two thousand millions; Schwammerdam counted 140 eggs in the body of one fly; but the eggs are renewed after each laying, and the fly lays four times during her life. Her children and grandchildren, with all their descendants, are assumed to come up to the enormous sum given, which does not of course include any 'disturbing influence' of birds or other things that prey on the large white maggots, which are the larvæ or 'masks' of the future fly.

A GLANCE AT A FAILING TRADE.

Once upon a time, as we have been credibly informed, a gentleman crossing a street in London was plucked by the sleeve by a beggar to whom he was in the daily habit of affording some small relief. Inspired by gratitude and the spirit of hospitality, the beggar whispered an invitation for dinner the next day, and slipping a card into his benefactor's hand, he hobbled on, in all his wretchedness, to pursue his calling.

Mr N——, though in the habit of receiving dinner-invitations, had never before had one from a beggar; so, for the novelty of the thing, he determined to avail himself of it. He found, by the card, that he was to wait on Mr Simmons at half-past four, which was considerably later than the fashionable dinner-hour at that time. True to the appointed hour, Mr N—— found himself at the door of a small neat house in a private street in the outskirts of London, now a crowded thoroughfare in the very heart of the city. A smartly dressed servant-maid shewed him up to the drawing-room, where a blazing fire looked cheerfully on that cold November day, and shone upon the polished furniture. The window-shutters were closed, and the curtains drawn; a few volumes lay upon the table; and everything denoted comfort if not luxury. Two ladies were seated by the fire; though not dressed in the very extreme of the fashion, their attire was modern and in good taste. They rose, and accosted Mr N—— with becoming grace. The elder lady said that Mr Simmons, having much business in the city, was detained till late; but as he was always punctual to the dinner-hour, she was 'sure he would be in soon.' She was interrupted by her daughter, who said 'she heard pa's knock.' It may be concluded that Mr Simmons was making his toilet, for when he appeared in about a quarter of an hour, Mr N—— could not have recognised him but for his voice, which still retained a considerable whine, even when he told a humorous story or cracked a joke. He sometimes, too, betrayed his calling by inadvertently exclaiming: 'Pity a poor'—— But self-possession was soon recalled, aided, perhaps, by the large pinch of snuff which he took in all haste, and so the sentence was never finished. There was a considerable improvement in his gait, for he seemed to have completely lost the halt for which Mr N—— had so often heartily pitied him: his ragged and threadbare coat was exchanged for a neat suit of black. Mr N—— observed that he had silk stockings, and silver buckles in his shoes; his flowing gray locks were replaced or concealed by a well-powdered peruke; and two or three times he took from his fob a silver watch. Politeness forbade his guest taking any notice of the changes by which he was struck. Dinner was served up comfortably, but not ostentatiously; a boiled leg of mutton, with its usual accompaniments of turnips, carrots, and capers; and some delicately dressed veal-cutlets, with a dish or two of vegetables, and an apple-pudding afterwards, completed the repast. Mr Simmons recommended the port, which was from a stock which had been in his cellar for upwards of six years. The conversation turned on the topics of the day, which appeared to be familiar to Mr Simmons. Mr N—— did not take his leave till after ten, as Miss Simmons accompanied herself in some songs on the harpsichord.

We may indeed say, those *were* the good old times. Gentlemen may now walk the length and breadth of London without being favoured with such an invitation. There are now no more paragraphs in the papers announcing the death of a Crœsus of a beggar, such as John Watkins, mentioned in Dodsley's *Annual Register* for the year 1759, who 'was a beggar for about fifty years last past, and often lodged in a glass-house, though he had a room in the city, in which two hundredweight of silver and half-pence, and a considerable quantity of gold, was found, *all acquired by begging*.' It is stated that Anne Bead left three hundred pounds in the funds, worth much more at that time than a sum of the same amount is now. John Cornwall, the cripple of Kent, died in the year 1765, having followed his calling for sixty years, leaving his wife four hundred guineas in gold, and a considerable sum in silver. *Poor Jo all alone*, as he pathetically apostrophised himself, and whose surname was known to no one but himself, left L.3000 by will, in the year 1767, for the benefit of widows and orphan children, though he had not himself lain upon a bed for upwards of fifty years.

One of the most remarkable cases of the accumulation of money by begging occurred in the county of Westmeath, in Ireland. A stream flows by the village, now called Rochfoot Bridge. Travellers, in former days, had no way of crossing but by fording the river. Notwithstanding this inconvenience, it was a great thoroughfare, and persons were constantly passing to and fro through the water by very imperfect stepping-stones. A wretched-looking beggar was ever to be seen by the bank, ready to accost the travellers as they came; and as he asked an alms, and invoked a shower of blessings on their heads, few went their way without dropping a coin into the hand which was stretched out to receive it. After a long life, most part of which had been spent by the side of the river, the beggar fell sick and died. The neighbours subscribed for a winding-sheet and a coffin for his burial. His clothes were too wretched and filthy to be of use to any one, and so were flung away. It chanced, some days after, that some boys were playing by the roadside, and one of them felt something hard under his foot: on stooping down to see what it might be, he perceived it was the beggar-man's ragged under-waistcoat; he tossed it away, and a piece of money fell out. On examination, it was found to be quilted with guineas. The boys took it to the magistrate, and he had the money applied to building a bridge across the very ford where it had been collected. For many years after, the adjoining village went by the name of Beggar's Bridge; but it now bears the more dignified appellation of Rochfoot Bridge.

In the days when beggars levied their own contributions, and amassed fortunes, as recorded in the public journals of the last century, it is well known that they held a regular community, and were governed by a king. They held their meetings every week, where laws were framed; and one annual meeting was held in some empty house in St Giles's, when two representatives from every other parish attended. Particular beats were portioned out; natural and artificial defects were put in requisition in the localities where they were most likely to tell. All disputes were settled, rights established, and transgressions punished at this congress. It was due to their patron saint that it should be held in the parish dedicated to him. He was by birth an Athenian, and having disposed of his patrimony to charitable uses, he went into France in the year 715, where he was a hermit until made abbot of an abbey at Nîmes, which the king had built expressly for him. It was believed of him, that when a mere youth, going to church one day, he took off his coat for a sick beggar who asked alms of him. The garment had a miraculous effect, for the mendicant was immediately cured of his ailment. Giles afterwards retired to a cave in a solitary desert. The French king happened to be hunting one day near the thicket, and Giles, who was at his prayers, was wounded by an arrow from a huntsman's bow. The king fell at his feet, imploring pardon, and gave orders that his wound should be carefully tended and cured; but that he resolutely refused, as he desired to have the continual suffering of pain, which he thought would increase his merits; and so he remained a cripple, and received reverence from the king, who, at his instance, built a monastery, of which he appointed Giles abbot. From henceforth he became the patron of cripples; and the church of St Giles, Cripplegate, is dedicated to him. Many miracles are ascribed to him, and it is told of him that '*many wytnesse that they herde the company of aungelles berynge the soule of hym into heven.*'

Who will say that the congress at St Giles's was not peculiarly suited to foster the intellectual powers? What a school for oratory!—what a field for fiction!—what matchless philosophy was here inculcated, where bodily infirmities were not only patiently borne, but actually coveted as blessings, looked upon as beauties, and assumed as embellishments! The child who was minus a leg, or an arm, or an eye, or, better still, both eyes, was gazed on by the delighted parents as the hope and pride of the family. With what rapture did they behold the premature development of the 'ills that flesh is heir to!' What admirers were in the train of the girl who was so fortunate as to have been born with a hump, or to have attained a broken back! What ogling of the charmer! How eloquent the language of the eyes, when she had only one to respond with! As the god of Love is represented blind, is it not right that she who inspires the passion should be blind also? An admirer urging his suit was sure to seek favour in proportion to his personal defects, as we should call them—but perfections, as they were considered by his fraternity.

'A man who had lost one leg,' said one conversant with this subject, 'was obliged to yield the palm to him who had lost both; and he who had neither legs nor arms, might be said to be at the head of his profession, and scarcely to have been distanced by any, except in extraordinary cases, an instance of which was given in a sailor who had but one eye, one leg, and no arms. This man asking in marriage the daughter of a celebrated blind beggar, was answered by her father that he would have thanked him for the honour intended, had not his daughter received some overtures from a man who crawled with his hinder parts in a porridge pot.' While the trade flourished, the socialist system was adopted in an extensive manner. A consumptive or rickety child was considered common property, and was handed from one to another every day in the week; instead of being punished for crying, it was encouraged to that healthful exercise of the lungs by pinches and scratches secretly administered to it. It was now paraded as an object for pity—a poor babe just discarded from the hospital as incurable; now exhibited as an orphan whose father had died that morning, not leaving one halfpenny to pay the expense of his interment; now it was the deserted infant of the unnatural brute who had left his poor wife some days before, to struggle through life as she best could; and now the youngest of eight children whose father had enlisted, and had been carried away, without even time to take his leave.

Scenes have been enacted in the open streets which must have been gratifying to the lover of the drama. We must remember that the first tragedians were, like our mendicants, mere strollers, with no better stage than a cart afforded; but our vagrants might have truly said, *all the world's a stage.* Garrick himself, perhaps, took lessons in the expression of the passions from the assumed woes of the ingenious pauper. We remember having been greatly moved by the admirable manner in which one of those talented persons acted her part. She contrived to give a world of pathos to a very common incident. There she sat at the steps of a door, with the fragments of broken delft scattered about her; her basket lay upset beside her; she wrung her hands and clasped them in agony, while tears streamed down her cheek. No one could pass her without leaving a coin beside her, and giving a word or look of pity, as they went their way. She asked nothing, told nothing, every one learned her story for himself. As for us, we saw in the poor creature a disappointment as bitter as could befall a human being. What matter though it was but common delft that she had lost; it was *her all*—the sole investment of many a day of hard labour—her *very all.* We mentioned the sad case where we dined, and the impression which it had made, and heard, with a great revulsion of feeling, that the same scene had been enacted at the extreme end of the other side of town, within a few hours after we had seen it; and the same tribute had been paid to genius by a sympathising audience.

Whatever we may think of the hardships of the vagrant life, it is not without a considerable share of interest. The study of the physiognomy of those appealed to, and the exercise of the imitative faculties, give it a great zest; the calculation on chances, too, has all the excitement of gambling; indeed, the proof of the charm of this strange life lies in the difficulty in reclaiming those who had adopted it. It is told of a justice who had a nice place near London, that he contrived to have his garden and pleasure-ground constantly kept free from weeds without his being put to any cost. The moment a beggar solicited alms at his door, he would ask why he was not at work.

'Work! Lord bless your honour,' he would say, 'I would be glad to get it, if I knew where.' 'Well,' the justice would say, 'I'll see what I can do. There is that plot of ground—when you have weeded it, you shall have a shilling.' Having been furnished with the necessary implements, to work the beggar would go with affected alacrity; but soon tiring of the monotony of his employment, he would take advantage of an opportunity, and steal away; thus a succession of applicants would take up where others had left off, and, like them, would make their escape as soon as they could; and so the weeds were cleared, and nothing to pay.

AN INCIDENT AT SEA.

We were about thirteen hundred miles to the south of the Cape of Good Hope, the nearest inhabited land. A dense black fog surrounded us, darkening the atmosphere, and rendering invisible every object at a greater distance than twenty or thirty yards from the vessel's side. The sea was foaming and leaping like a seething caldron, dashing over the bulwarks, and thundering against the sides of our floating home with such fury that every timber vibrated to the shock, and the bonny *Swift* trembled like a living thing. The gale blew with monotonous undeviating force, and moaned sullenly through the rigging. Very scanty was the ship's apparel. Instead of the magnificent sheets of snowy canvas, wherewith, in more favourable weather, her taper spars were clothed, nothing save close-reefed top-sails and a single jib-sheet could be safely set. Yet on we drove, at the rate of fifteen knots an hour, through a turbulent sea, where the waves followed no definite course, but rolled, and tossed, and crossed each other in every possible direction. We were on the outer edge of a typhoon, and on the skill and scientific knowledge of the captain depended life and safety. A single error in our course would have carried us into the vortex of the dread hurricane, and the very circumstance which favoured our onward progress would have become the cause of our destruction.

The first dinner-bell had just been rung, when a cry arose of 'A ship! a ship!' Those who have never lost sight of *terra firma* can form but a faint notion of the excitement caused by such an apparently trifling incident as the meeting of vessels far out at sea. We, one and all, quitted our temporary occupations, and hurried on deck. Looking to windward, we beheld a large frigate-built ship, about a hundred yards off, not sailing on any course, but apparently lying-to. The mist, I should state, had just then lifted slightly, or we should have passed her unnoticed. As it was, only by straining the vision could we perceive her, dimly visible, like a spectral ship alongside. No living being was seen on her decks, and in a few minutes the fog again descended, and, like a thick curtain, completely shut her out from view.

'That vessel is lying-to on the wrong tack,' said Captain P——. 'The typhoon will surely take her aback before morning.'

'And then?'

'Why, then, her owners will never hear of her again!'

To signalise, warning her of the danger, was impossible, for our signals could not have been seen; to go about and endeavour to get nearer, was perilous; so there was nothing for it but to drive on, and hope for the preservation of the unknown ship. Still, there were few amongst us who did not feel that the dinner—that great event of ship-life—had lost its usual charm, and few and meagre were the jokes at table that day.

All night long the wind howled and the waters roared with ceaseless fury. In the morning, we found that the tempest had sensibly abated; and ere the hour of 'tiffin' arrived, the *Swift* was bowling merrily along with all her canvas spread. The mist had disappeared, and the sun shone from a sky so softly blue, that it was difficult to gaze upon it, and recall the gloomy scene of yesterday. Old Ocean, however, still maintained his rebellious aspect. Far as the eye could reach, the waves rolled in long regular undulations, tier above tier, like the ranges of an Alpine region. The *Swift* rocked to and fro, plunging and rolling in the heavy swell after a fashion calculated to destroy our equilibrium, and seriously to interfere with our equanimity. As the day wore on, however, the swell gradually subsided, and when the welcome bell again rung, at four P.M., we were gliding on the smooth surface of unruffled waters.

Towards evening, another change came over the scene. A fog-bank, heavy and dense, came rolling up from the south, and quickly enveloped us in thick darkness. Unable to distinguish even the declining sun, we retreated to the saloon, and accepting the invitation of a friend, who sympathised with our admiration of a good old game, we were soon deep in the mysteries of backgammon.

'Land! land!' shouted voices from the main-deck. Land in that part of the ocean? What could it mean? The board was incontinently abandoned, and a rush on deck ensued. Then we beheld a strange and unwonted spectacle. At first sight, we really seemed to be close in-shore, but a steady gaze dispelled the illusion.

Overhead, the sky was clear and unclouded, for the fog had lifted, and was rolling away to the south-west, where it formed an immense crescent-shaped bank, which resembled rather a huge rocky barrier than an assemblage of vapour. The upper edge of this bank was as clearly defined against the blue sky as the sharp crest of a mountain-range; and along the base, where it touched the water, there appeared a darker line—seemingly the shadow of the precipitous shore. The whole presented the appearance of a mountainous coast, along, and in dangerous proximity to which the ship was passing. At the extreme westerly point, where the bank sloped to the horizon, the illusion was increased by the effects of sunset. A resplendent golden haze melting gradually into a delicate rosy blush, and that again paling into the blue of heaven, suggested the idea of sunrise, so that the gazer almost expected to behold the chariot of day roll over the crest of the shadowy mountain. A few sea-birds flitted about, like spectres, in the increasing gloom; and in the east hovered some ragged clouds, which the upward-glancing rays of the sun tinted with vivid hues—fiery red and glowing orange—offering a strong contrast to the heavily looming cloud-land in the west.

Gradually the various colours died out, the breeze came stealing over the water, the outlines of the fog-bank became disturbed, and in twenty minutes the whole was scattered and shapeless.

The same evening we were just sitting down to a snug party of whist, when the officer of the watch entered the saloon, looking very anxious and perplexed, and hesitatingly requested the captain to come on deck. His tone and manner arrested our attention, and visions of many possible calamities floated through our minds.

'What is the matter?' asked the captain.

The mate explained that he had heard a strange noise on the water, greatly resembling the sound of a fog-horn. The man at the wheel and a passenger had also heard it. At first, he said, it seemed to come from a point to windward of us; but as the ship proceeded, the noise was repeated astern, as though we had passed the cause.

The captain threw down his cards, and hastened on deck, and we followed the worthy skipper. Listening intently, we all heard a repetition of the alarming sound. Captain P—— pronounced it to be human voices screaming, as in distress; an old colonist averred that it was a distant 'Coo-ee!'—the Australian bushman's call; and for my own part, I felt assured that I heard the seaman's hail, 'Ship ahoy!' come faintly wailing over the dark ocean.

The captain at once put the helm down, squared the main-yard, and burned a blue-light. Brightly and vividly the flame flashed across the waves, and, as if it was perceived, the cries were repeated again and again, and always from the same quarter. Differ as we might in our interpretation of their precise nature, we all agreed on the direction whence they came. Then we called to mind the vessel so dimly perceived lying-to on the previous day, and there was no longer a doubt in the mind of any one of us that some poor wretches were tossing wearily in a boat, or on a raft, in the midst of the desolate ocean: desolate, indeed, in those latitudes, where few vessels sail save those bound to the Australias. The victims of fire or wreck had floated past our ship, apparently unheard and unnoticed in the dark night. We pictured them to ourselves—hungry and half-naked, cold, wet, and weary—clinging to a few frail planks or spars. How hope must have cheered that wretched band when the dashing waves carried them alongside the tall vessel which they had beheld looming close by! How they had exerted the remnants of their expiring strength to make themselves heard! How fainter and fainter waned their hopes as they drifted past the ship without response! As the hoarse waters bore them astern, how expectation died, and in despair unutterable, they cast themselves along the timbers of the raft, with the conviction that their misery might be prolonged, but that destruction must inevitably overtake them at last!

What were the feelings of the unfortunate castaways? What urgent, soul-engendered supplications would they not pour out! What heart-rending cries would ascend to the very throne of the Creator! Heaven have mercy upon them! What aid, what succour shall reach them, and deliver them from the jaws of death? What terrible sighs—what woful lamentations for iniquities committed in past times—what vows and protestations of amendment for the future! Alas! that future seems for ever lost in this world—for ever enduring in another!

Then we pictured those same helpless, wo-worn wretches, startled, gladdened by the far visible vivid blue-light. Joy! joy!—they have been heard. Help—life—restoration to home and kindred are at hand. Ere long, they will ascend the sides of our ship, tenderly aided by rude hands, but kind and sympathising hearts. Who amongst us would not gladly yield up comfort and selfish ease, if to do so would benefit the rescued strangers?

Whilst these thoughts were rapidly passing through our excited minds, the captain had taken the necessary steps for the succour of the lonely seafarers. Slowly but surely the ship wore round, and returned on her track in search of them. Blue-lights were kept continually burning, and Mr Quain, the chief officer, shouted with stentorian energy 'Boat ahoy!' Then we listened for a reply, in silence so intense that we could distinctly hear the beating of our own hearts. By this time, the intelligence had spread throughout the ship, and the crew and all the passengers, young and old, had turned out to witness the result. Not a sound was heard amongst these people, one hundred and forty in number. Eve breath was hushed, every tongue mute; in comm parlance, a pin might have been heard had it fal on the deck. Presently, over the murmuring wa came a faint sound. 'There is the answer!' we exclaimed. It is impossible by dint of mere words convey an adequate idea of the consequent exci ment: one of the lady-passengers absolutely fainte many shed silent tears; and the faces of the colde and least sentimental men aboard were blanched wi sympathising apprehension.

Again the loud voice of the chief officer shout 'Boat ahoy!' and again, but this time nearer a more distinctly, the answering cry was heard. Almo at the same instant, a second response came from t opposite quarter. Good Heaven! were there, the two boat-loads or raft-loads of sufferers? On s the ship, to seek an answer to our painful though Lights were now burned both on the forecastle a at the stern. Nearer and nearer we approached t sounds, which became every moment more freque and distinct. Presently, they appeared to be close hand, and we peered anxiously through the gloom, i hope of discovering the source whence they emanate We failed, however, to perceive anything, and o confusion—I had almost said our dismay—may conceived when the cries were heard simultaneous from all quarters. We seemed to be in the midst a host of wailing wretches, who were neverthel invisible. What mystery was this?

Presently, an impression seized first one mi then another, then more. Some ventured to whis it—they grew bolder in their opinion—they ma converts to their belief. Soon conviction seized up all of us; the mate echoed it, the captain confirm it Was it?—— Yes, after all, it was the sea-birds calling to each other as they floated on ocean!

'It is their mating season,' said the captain quie 'Brace up the main-yards, and put the ship ab Mr Quain. And now, gentlemen, we will finish whist.'

'The captain is a gentleman,' said we. 'A q voyage is his delight, but he did not hesitate to the loss of a fair wind by going back in search of supposed castaways; neither did he utter a si reproach to the officer who gave the false alarm.'

Whereupon we resumed our seat at the card-ta and cut him an honour.

SONG.

DRENCHED by the wintry seas,
Sullied and torn,
Dove of the distant trees,
Where wast thou born?
Who, when the autumn breeze
Rifted thy nest,
Drove thee, with sighs like these,
Straight to my breast?

Spread not thy wings for me,
White-plumaged dove;
Whither should Sorrow flee,
Cradled by Love?
Wet though thy pinions be,
Fair thine eyes shine;
Tears, if they fell on thee,
Trembled from mine.

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A MODERN 'MYSTERY.'

It is generally believed that the rude old drama known as the *mystery* or *miracle* is in desuetude; but in the year 1850 it was represented in the presence of thousands of the curious from all parts of Germany.

During the Thirty Years' War, Oberammergau, an obscure village of Upper Bavaria, was ravaged by a formidable epidemic. The Benedictine monks of the neighbouring monastery of Ettal induced the inhabitants to offer a public vow, that, should the pestilence cease, they would thereafter, every tenth year, publicly celebrate the passion of the Saviour. The pestilence ceased; and from the year 1634 the villagers have religiously observed their vow by representing the mystery of the passion at the specified periods. All the inhabitants took part in the exhibition. The youth of the village appeared on the stage from the most tender years, and by regular gradation were promoted to the principal characters. The villagers already rivalled the Tyrolese in the art of carving on wood, and to this talent they soon associated that of actors, decorators, and scenic artists.

For nearly two centuries, and until the clergy of Munich forbade its continuance, the sacred representation was exhibited. Maximilian Joseph annulled the ecclesiastical prohibition; he required, however, that a few details should be expunged. The conduct of the devil and his followers was a little racy, and their language against the saints somewhat strong and decided. Ottmar Weiss, the village clergyman, an old Benedictine monk of Ettal, was intrusted with the direction of the remodelling, and he performed the task to the satisfaction of his brethren. The drama reappeared with these amendments in 1811. In 1820, it was performed with music expressly composed for the occasion by Professor Dadler. Since this latter date, it has appeared every tenth year. On the last decennial occasion, so large an audience attended that it was found necessary to enlarge the theatre, which had been adapted for the accommodation of 6000 persons. Indeed, at one representation, 3000 were turned back from want of room!

The representations are twelve in number, and succeed each other during the summer and autumn. The last is usually held about the end of October.

Oberammergau presents a curious spectacle upon the morning of one of these representations. From daybreak, the villagers are all in preparation. Strangers arrive in crowds, and are received with the most cordial welcome. The solitary village inn is insufficient for their accommodation, and they take their way in small groups towards the mountain-cottages, with their large projecting roofs and walls of glittering whiteness, adorned by the image of the Virgin, or by frescoes representing some scriptural incident, and surrounded by a garden of flowers. Upon the doorway, according to ancient custom, is written the name of the proprietor. The hospitality with which the strangers are received is disinterested. They are only charged the exact amount of the expense, rigidly calculated, of their entertainment. The mountaineers, proud and delighted at the interest excited by themselves and their drama, use every effort to shew themselves worthy of it. The old and young in every house have some assigned task. He who cannot sing or represent a character, plays on the violin or flute in the orchestra, or assists in the internal works of the theatre. The entire community is transformed for the common profit into a theatrical enterprise. The exhibition, however, can hardly be described as a speculation, strictly speaking. It must not be forgotten that the villagers are skilful carvers in wood, and carry on a profitable trade in this branch of industry. If the time employed in the complicated preparations for these gigantic representations is considered, it will be easily understood that other employments would be at least equally lucrative.

The twelve representations in 1850 produced about 20,000 florins, but the expenses were very considerable.

The pastor of Oberammergau superintends and discharges the duty with ability and care. His powers are discretionary, and it is universally admitted that he understands the peculiar aptitudes of each member of his flock, and exhibits them in the light best calculated to display the dramatic powers of the humblest of his artists.

The solemn moment has arrived; we must pass from the Bavarian village to Sion.

The audience is accommodated in a very large space, fenced off. Only the centre of the stage is closed. It contains a theatre constructed on the usual plan, with movable decorations, and a curtain. On either side of the central theatre, and in the open air, other decorations are visible, whose use appears during the development of the representation. All around, lesser wooden enclosures are observable. These are the apartments of the performers, and the common green-room in which they await their turn for appearance in the theatre. Through the meadow there are tents for the refreshment of the spectators during the fatigues of the coming day, and these accessories must be very agreeable, for the representation does not conclude in less than eight hours, and it is occasionally interrupted by an interval of another hour.

The space reserved for the audience is uncovered, with the exception of three boxes to the back. There is accommodation, as we have said, for more than 6000 persons, upon simple wooden benches without backs; and they sit there during the day in spite of heat, rain, or snow; the last, of course, not being unusual in that mountain valley. The rain has frequently fallen uninterruptedly during the representation, so heavily indeed, that the performers have been compelled, for the protection of their dresses, to take shelter under the red umbrella of the country. As for the audience, they have no alternative but to submit to the rain and snow, and they do so with an amazing forbearance. Those on the back seats will not permit their friends in front to put up their umbrellas, nor even to wear the large mountain-hat, which, in an extremity, might be not a bad substitute.

The price of the seats is sufficiently high. A seat on the front benches, immediately behind the orchestra, costs 1 florin and 12 kreuzers; those behind—in proportion to their distance from the stage—48, 24, and 15 kreuzers. The seats in the centre boxes are 1 florin 48 kreuzers; whilst in the boxes to the side, they are 1 florin 36 kreuzers. It is against all rule to decline this expense; and any one in the district who does not at least pay for attending the performance, is ill regarded in his own neighbourhood, and would be foolish to offer himself for any public office.

The covered central theatre is set apart for the representation of the mystery of the passion, properly so called. The curtain falls at the close of each scene. This curtain represents a spacious street, terminating in imposing mansions on the right and left of the stage. At a short distance, two arched gateways open upon other streets. Before these subordinate decorations, incidents of Holy Writ are portrayed during the interludes. High-mass is celebrated in the church of Oberammergau, and the community prepare themselves devotionally for the exercises of the day. An overture is performed by the combined orchestras of the village and district, the only assistance which the company condescend to receive. The chorus then commences the drama by a prologue, explaining, in its peculiar fashion, the doctrine of the redemption of man by the blood of the Saviour. There are two portraitures in illustration: the one shews Adam driven out of Paradise, and the sacrifice of Abraham; the other, the adoration of the Cross. These intermediate representations are mechanical; the actors only appear in the scenes of the mystery. The chorus is composed of fourteen persons, men, women, and children in whimsical dresses, all of the same pattern. They advance in two bands to the front of the stage, arranged like the pipes of an organ, and sing with voices, if not practised, at least in perfect harmony. The music is simple, languishing, and occasionally trivial, such as Pierse Winter brought into fashion in Germany towards the commencement of this century. It is agreeable, and occasionally pathetic. The drama itself immediately follows the prologue. The curtain rises, and discovers the entry of the Saviour into Jerusalem. The further end of the theatre is open, and thus a landscape, lit by the light of a real sun, stretches away in the distance. Men, women, old and young, with palms in their hands, cry out: 'Hosannah! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.' They press forward before the Saviour, issuing from the stage and the side-streets, and mingle with the priests and scribes who throng from the other avenues. This scene is full of life and of picturesque movement.

The decorations of the central stage are changed. The Saviour is discovered at the entry of the temple, where the sellers and buyers are carrying on their trade. He is seen threatening the traders, and driving them off; their imprecations are violent: there is a dispute between the priests and the multitude, the priests taking part with the traders, the multitude with the Saviour. All this is represented with precision and energy. The audience is carried back for eighteen centuries; one of the grand old German pictures is starting into life. Of the hundred performers, there is not one who is not absorbed in his own *rôle*, and does not acquit himself with a singular vivacity of expression, and assist the general illusion. In the choral performance, every word, every exclamation is distinct; even the articulation of the children is intelligible and pure. The appearance of the Saviour has a striking effect, enhanced by the perfect conformity of the actor who personates the holy form with that traditional type which painting has bequeathed to us.

These two scenes are the exposition of the drama that is to follow. The principal performers return to the stage, and one of them describes minutely, in rapid recitative, what has been seen, and what is to follow. The chorus repeats the summary; it then retires towards the pillars of the theatre, and an intermediate tableau shews the twelve sons of Jacob premeditating the murder of their brother Joseph. The chorus, in energetic verse, denounces the guilty brothers; it again withdraws. The curtain rises, and the Sanhedrim is discovered.

To the right and left are seated the members of the Council, and at the further end, Annas and Caiaphas the presidents. They deliberate upon the danger with which Jesus of Nazareth threatens property and social life. Several of the members address the assembly. The traders of the temple, the very men whom the Saviour has driven from the holy place, are there with their formal complaint. The destruction of Jesus is determined upon. This deliberation, which is very protracted, is sustained by the talent and keenness of the dialogue. The chief interest centres in Caiaphas. This personage, with his golden mitre and robe of dark red, acts his part so well that he is almost forgiven his Upper Bavarian accent, and the somewhat too familiar expressions in which he occasionally indulges.

After this meeting of the Council, the chorus reappears on the stage, and introduces two further tableaux—'Tobias taking Leave of his Parents,' and 'the Virgin of the Song of Solomon Mourning for her Betrothed.' These representations are intended to correspond with the scene in which the Saviour at Bethany separates himself from Joseph and Mary.

The Virgin appears in her traditional red robe and blue mantle; her attitudes are borrowed from the most celebrated religious paintings.

In the following scenes, the Saviour is seen at table in the house of Simon; and Mary Magdalene is pouring upon his head the spikenard and myrrh. From this moment the approaching treason of Judas is foreshadowed: the rapacious traitor is in admirable contrast with the divine nature and sublime self-devotion of the Saviour. In the scene that follows—that in which the Redeemer proceeds to Jerusalem to eat the Paschal Lamb—Judas falls into the snare of the traders, and pledges himself to betray his Master.

The fifth scene shews the Paschal Feast and the formal institution of the Holy Eucharist. It is extracted word for word from the text of the evangelists, and is sustained with much solemnity and pomp.

In the sixth scene, the chorus explains the picture

'Joseph Sold by his Brethren;' and then the drama discovers Judas in the Sanhedrim receiving the thirty pieces of silver.

Three pictures connected with the lives of Adam, Joab, and Samson are exhibited in illustration of the approaching scene in the Garden of Olives. Jesus is on the mountain. His three disciples are asleep. Twice the Saviour, in his mortal agony, falls with his face upon the ground. As he rises, the bloody sweat rolls down his face. Judas appears with the guards, and betrays him with a kiss. The Saviour is loaded with irons, and dragged away.

Another intermediate tableau shews 'the Prophet Micaiah smitten upon the Cheek by Zedekiah whilst proclaiming the Word of the Lord to Ahab.' A new series of scenes follow. The Saviour in chains is brought before Annas, who interrogates him. He is reviled and beaten by the soldiers before the house of the high-priest. He is dragged from street to street, from palace to palace; thrust before Caiaphas and Herod; spat upon, forsaken, betrayed, denied by his companions and disciples. He is brought before the Grand Council, who condemn him to die upon false evidence. He is insulted in the courtyard, and taken to the palace of Herod, who receives him with curiosity. There are scenes intermixed in which Peter denies his Master; and Judas, having given back to the priests their pieces of silver, flees in desperation to the wood, to perish by his own hand. The despair of Judas is expressed with striking effect: he tears his hair, casts his mantle from him, rends off his yellow robe, grasps his girdle, and looks with haggard eyes towards the tree which he has chosen to hang from. With savage haste he puts aside the branches, twists his girdle round the strongest he can reach, forms a running-noose, thrusts in his head—and the curtain falls at that moment.

The Redeemer is now dragged before Pilate. Seated in state, and resplendent in the Roman apparel, he offers to the people either Jesus or Barabbas. The people demand the blood of the Saviour. Pilate washes his hands from the blood of the victim, breaks into pieces his baton of office, and flings the fragments from him. The guards seize their victim. The priests and the multitude rejoice over the decree of death pronounced by the proconsul.

As the action proceeds and hurries to a close, the emotion and interest increase. The bearing of the cross has a most wonderful effect. The Roman centurion on horseback opens the procession at the head of his soldiery, formed in double file; in the midst is the Saviour, tottering under the heavy instrument of death; he falls at last, breathless; the procession halts awhile. In the distance advance, in the midst of their guards, the 'good and wicked thieves,' each carrying his cross. Simon of Cyrene stands in the centre of the theatre, and at the opening of a road in front, a group of women and children follow the procession, filling the air with their sobs and lamentations. The Saviour addresses them: 'Weep not for me, but for yourselves, ye children of Jerusalem.' Simon assumes the cross, and the train proceeds amid hooting and vociferations; the Virgin, St John, and Mary Magdalene, with a group of holy women, follow at a distance.

The chorus reappears in mourning garments, with sandals, girdles, and black mantles. The leader utters the recitative to a funereal accompaniment more distinct and louder than before. He proceeds thus:

> Approach, thou pious Soul!
> Impelled by love, repentance, and by grief,
> Ascend to Golgotha!
> And see the Mighty Victim die forsaken,
> Bearing thy heavy sins.

He announces that the executioners are fastening the Redeemer to the cross, and as he does so, the strokes of a hammer are heard behind the curtain. It rises, and Golgotha appears.

The two thieves are already lifted to the tree; there is some delay in attaching to the beam over the Saviour's head the writing which Pilate had commanded. This is done, despite the opposition of the priests, and then the Saviour is carried on the cross into the midst of the theatre. By the help of large wedges driven into the earth, he has the semblance of being fastened to the tree. The soldiers, the priests, and people are picturesquely grouped over the stage, whilst at the foot of the cross, surrounded by her companions, weeps the mother of our Lord.

It is impossible to convey any idea of the effect of this living crucifixion upon an assembly under religious impressions, and agitated by pity and terror. Every word uttered from the cross, every inclination of the forehead girded with thorns, the last sigh, the last words, 'It is finished!' thrill through every heart. The varieties of the multitude pressing around the cross, the railleries of the priest, the rage and coarseness of the tormentors, enhance the effect. Art could not conceive and execute any representation more overpowering.

And now the two malefactors are taken down from the cross; the thrust of the lance has reddened the Saviour's side; Joseph of Arimathea has obtained permission to bury the body of his Master; the priests, the soldiers, the people retire; all is silent as the grave. The group of holy women and the disciples are around the cross, and the sobs of the Virgin are alone heard. Joseph and another man ascend the ladder on either side of the cross, throw a white garment over the arms and breast of Jesus, and exhibit the immortal painting of Rubens. The sacred body is wrapped in precious cloth, and carried to the sepulchre.

Thunder and the earthquake are heard during the crucifixion; they recur when the body is placed in the tomb, and when the guards attend to watch it.

The roof of the sepulchre is rent in twain; the Redeemer rises in glory; the guards awake at the sound, and fly in terror; the holy women visit the sepulchre, and the angel announces the resurrection of their Lord. The priests endeavour to distort the feelings aroused by these prodigies; and the last representation discovers the Saviour victorious, and surrounded by the faithful, whilst the traders and the priests in dismay prostrate themselves in the dust.

A simple mountaineer named Pflunger, a wood-carver and writing-master, enacted the principal character upon the occasion described, and shewed himself a great artist. An infinite majesty, an unchanging serenity, a touching resignation, characterised this beautiful representation. He invariably produced a solemn sensation through that immense audience, particularly in those scenes where he is stripped of his garments, bound to the martyr's column, beaten with rods, crowned with thorns, and mockingly exposed in his robe of purple to the gaze of the multitude between the two thieves. It is actually said of this man, and no higher eulogy could be bestowed upon his performance, that the public almost believe that he is invested with the divinity which he represents, and regard him with corresponding feelings of love and veneration.

The whole affair is organised by the priesthood, it is sanctioned by their high authorities, and is entertained with reverential feelings by all classes of a wide community; it is, in fact, a great religious festival, and it cannot be regarded as in dissonance with the general views of the Roman Catholic Church to use such extraordinary freedom with the most sacred subjects of human contemplation.

This exhibition is certainly strange, and to Protestant minds may seem in many respects objectionable. We have thought it, however, sufficiently remarkable, both in itself, and as an exponent of the religious mind of a portion of Europe, to be worthy of notice in a British periodical.

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS—CHAPTER II.

When at length Isabel was sufficiently composed to return with me to the drawing-room, we found Mrs Vivian at the piano, and her brother listening to her fine voice with evidently extreme enjoyment. I felt vexed to see them thus engaged, for Isabel had no musical talent herself, and I feared, under present circumstances, the effect of the smallest injurious comparison. As I sat and watched Mr Lorimer following note by note with critical enthusiasm and affection for the accomplished singer, I regretted still more that this subtle way of reaching her husband's heart was closed against Isabel. Mrs Vivian rose, however, as soon as she had finished her song, saying: 'I wont bore Mrs Lorimer with my loud voice; I know she does not care about music;' and the piano was closed, for neither host nor hostess challenged her assertion. Mr Lorimer began to talk kindly and pleasantly to me, informed me of his departure for Scotland, and mentioned incidentally that he must start so early that he should breakfast by six o'clock in the morning.

'Oh, well,' said Mrs Vivian, 'I shall be up to pour out your coffee: there is nothing so cheerless as to set off on a journey with no one to see that your greatcoat is buttoned, and to wish you "God-speed!"'

I looked anxiously towards Isabel, for I could see she was trembling with repressed indignation; she commanded herself, however, admirably, and spoke quietly enough.

'Pray, do not disturb yourself so early, Caroline; I have made my own arrangements for the morning, and propose to breakfast with my husband alone.'

Mrs Vivian shrugged her shoulders, expressive of scornful acquiescence in this new caprice, and Mr Lorimer appeared too intent on the *Bradshaw* he had taken up to hear the remark.

About half-past five on the following morning, I was awakened by Isabel standing already dressed by my bedside. She wished me to get up, and join her and her husband at the breakfast-table.

'I do not know what I may be tempted to say to him, Aunt Sarah, but I feel as if I could not let him go away in his present estrangement, especially when I fear he has such serious business for his object. I have thought for some time past that he has seemed anxious and ill at ease. Oh, he must take me to his heart again—speak to me kindly!'

'But, my dear child, had you not better be alone?'

She thought not; if I were present, I could judge for myself, and I should be no restraint upon her. I thought how lovely she looked presiding at the table in her simple white gown, and felt persuaded her husband must think so too when he came in. But when he did, after a few civil speeches to me, he seemed too hurried and preoccupied to notice anything. He swallowed his breakfast in five minutes, and then rose at once and rung the bell impatiently for the carriage to come round.

'I must be off immediately,' he said, looking at his watch; 'I would not miss the train on any account. Good-by, Isabel.'

What could be done in the way of remonstrance or entreaty under such circumstances? A man under fear of losing the train is scarcely tolerant of conjugal embraces, much less of conjugal reproaches. Isabel had timed her appeal badly. She stood irresolute, her eyes downcast, her brow clouded. I saw Mr Lorimer had made a movement towards her, as if to kiss her, but turned shortly from her on remarking her attitude. He evidently misunderstood her, for he compressed his lips with an expression of such bitter feeling, though it was but transient, that I felt how deep a current of suffering and disappointment ran beneath his calm and ordinary manner.

'I hope you will not find the country very dull,' he said to me; 'Isabel must do her best to amuse you during my absence; it is very kind of you to come and stay with her. Take care of the children, Isabel.'

He turned and was going. I touched Isabel's arm, and she sprang suddenly forward so as to intercept his way to the door.

'You will write to me?' she asked eagerly—'you will let me know your movements? Are you likely to be long absent?—a month?—six weeks? Lorimer, speak to me kindly before you go away!'

I saw the colour rise angrily to Mr Lorimer's face.

'Why have you reserved your tender appeal till the last moment?' he said. 'Were you anxious for a witness to your protest against my neglect? I shall write to you duly. Don't attempt to delay me another moment.'

He spoke in a hard, severe tone—put her gently on one side, as she blocked his passage—and was gone. A moment after, we heard the carriage roll from the door. Isabel clasped her hands.

'Am I not a blundering fool?' she cried passionately. 'I never make an attempt to heal but I widen the breach. He thinks, now, I am playing a part—wanting to convince you I am a neglected wife!'

She walked restlessly up and down the room. I had not much to say in the way of consolation. I had felt from the first that it was impolitic to have insisted on my presence during the interview, but she had overruled my objection; and I was deeply grieved to see matters were worse between them than I had thought. I had hoped last night that Isabel had exaggerated or mistaken her position.

'And it does not seem so very long ago,' continued she, gloomily, 'that he never left me for a few hours without a tender farewell. I never came into the room but he smiled and gave me a seat near him. He could scarcely pass me without a touch that was a caress; and now'——

'O child,' I said, 'you must have acted very ill!'

'Have I not told you so?' she returned bitterly; 'and do I not suffer for it? He never loved me as I love him now. What long patience he had with me—blind to my selfishness, indulgent to my vanity, giving me so much with such an ungrudging lavishness, and only asking me to acknowledge it and love him! Can I blame his sister that she helped him to discover how unworthy I was?'

'I fear,' I said, 'she still does you harm. She will not be here when your husband returns. I cannot believe, Isabel, that when left alone to exercise a judicious influence, you will not regain the place you have lost. There must be some tenderness left for you in his heart; your love must reanimate it.'

She shook her head. 'No; I despair of it. His love and pride have both been too deeply wounded. He does not believe that what I feel is love, but caprice—the desire to regain power and influence lost. He does not think I love my children; but we cannot continue to live like this. If there is no change for the better on his return, we must part—we'——

The entrance of Mrs Vivian arrested the conversation; she appeared in a most elaborate morning-toilet, and apparently in superabundant spirits.

'It was cruel of you to forbid my wishing my brother good-bye, Mrs Lorimer,' she said gaily. 'I tried to hail him from my window; but the noise of the wheels, or his grief in parting from his Isabel, made the effort vain. I wish my engagements permitted my staying a day or two longer with you till *your* spirits had rallied.'

This was intended for sarcasm, for, of course, poor Isabel was doing her best to appear cheerful and unconcerned, and, as she had said, she had always succeeded so well in this doubtful *ruse* as effectually to deceive her husband as well as her sister-in-law. Mrs Vivian chatted on while taking her leisurely breakfast, until the effort of repartee became too much for Isabel, and she left the room under the excuse of going to her nursery. Left thus alone with the stranger guest, a sudden resolution seized me. I had been studying Mrs Vivian's countenance for some time attentively, and I came to the conclusion that though her manners might not please me, there was no indication of want of heart or intelligence in her physiognomy, and that I, in my turn, would make a sudden appeal. When she rose, to excuse herself for leaving me, to make her final arrangements for her departure, I begged her to remain a few minutes longer, as I had a matter of importance about which I was anxious to consult her. She reseated herself immediately, with an air of undisguised surprise, then, on a sudden, her brow clouded.

'It is about your niece?—about Mrs Lorimer and my brother. Do not let us speak of it, my dear madam. I should be really grieved to hurt your feelings on the subject; but it is one on which I cannot trust myself to speak calmly.' She was going, her tactics of retreat evidently corresponding with those of Mr Lorimer; but I intercepted her boldly.

'Do let me speak,' I urged. 'I am so thoroughly convinced that Isabel is misunderstood, wronged by both of you; unconsciously, of course, but still wronged. A little explanation'——

But I had chosen my expressions ill.

'Wronged!' Mrs Vivian repeated with flashing eyes—'wronged!'

'I beseech you to be patient,' I said, half smiling. 'I am but a bungling old woman, but I love my niece as my own child, and I cannot witness her unhappiness without some attempt, however awkward, to arrest it. Do you imagine she is happy, Mrs Vivian?'

'Yes, or at least I imagine her to have a constitutional guarantee against the reverse,' was the reply; 'an entire unmitigated heartlessness. Oh, my dear madam, you touch a sore place by your appeal! I cannot contain myself when I think how my brother has sacrificed himself to that girl! Wise men are the greatest fools in love,' she pursued rapidly; 'and when they married, he doted upon her shadow. Nothing he could give her was too good for her, or rather he never considered how much he gave her. I never liked the marriage; but I would have held my peace, and received her as a sister, had she loved him. But she cared nothing for him! How dared she sell herself thus? and accept not only his wealth and position, but his true noble affection as mere tribute to her puerile attractions, without having anything to give in exchange—not even a heart? What did she reckon herself worth? and, good Heavens! how long the man was befooled!'

Mrs Vivian paused, exhausted, and I tried to seize my opportunity. 'Granted that she was guilty of marrying him without loving him,' I said; 'consider the great temptations offered, not by his position chiefly, but by the ardour of his own passion; and at least she was free from the greater guilt of loving any one else. Ah, I understand your sneer, Mrs Vivian, but I repeat you wrong Isabel. She may have been selfish, weak, and vain, and have had her young head turned by flattery—her husband's flattery more than any other—but she has a heart; she feels deeply, passionately; she repents the past; she loves her husband now.'

Mrs Vivian shook her head scornfully. 'She deceives you, perhaps she deceives herself. She repents the loss of his love, I doubt not, because it involves the loss of her power; she may even, in the spirit of coquetry, be anxious to possess herself of it again. But love—that is, unselfish affection—is beyond her. I think it probable she may dread the consequences of this alienation, but she need not be afraid; my brother is so chivalrous that, did he feel her a heavier burden than he does, he would not shake her off at the expense of her own humiliation.'

My cheek flushed. I felt too indignant to find words. Mrs Vivian perceived it, and continued more gently: 'We view this matter very differently, of course; but you must remember I have this advantage over you—I have been a witness of their married life—of his devotion, patience, and blindness, of her egregious vanity, exigence, and selfishness. But it is over now; she can never delude him again. From the moment he became convinced all his love had been wasted—that there had never been a moment's response to his disinterested affection—that, in fact, she had married him for his money—the enchantment was dispelled. What he has suffered, God only knows. I imagine I hear the tone of his voice now as when he said to me: "She *never* loved me, Caroline; she deceived me from her first kiss;" and can you wonder that my indignation is so strong?'

I was silent. I felt it would be vain to protest.

'I must go,' she said, rising. 'We will not quarrel over this matter—you and I;' and she held out her hand with a smile.

'Only one word more,' I said, retaining it. '*If*—you may admit it as a possibility—*if* there should ever be a hope of reconciliation, you will not mar it? I mean, you will not use your influence against the wife?'

'Impossible!' she said; but my importunity succeeded in winning the promise from her.

When Mrs Vivian came down stairs to take her departure, Isabel was standing in the hall, waiting to bid her guest farewell. Little Lily was clinging to her side, timid, tender, and silent as seemed her wont. The sight of the fair mother and child thus linked together seemed to touch Mrs Vivian. Yielding to what was evidently a sudden impulse, she went up to Isabel, and took her hand.

'Good-bye, Mrs Lorimer. I cannot help feeling a kind of pity for you, in spite of your conduct—in spite, too, of your contemptuous disclaimer,' she added, smiling, for Isabel had winced at the expression, and drawing up her graceful neck, looked haughtily down upon the sympathiser. 'Have you any idea,' pursued Mrs Vivian after a moment's reflection, 'what business it is that takes your husband to Glasgow at this particular time? No? I hardly think Lorimer is right to leave you unwarned that there is a fearful chance of your losing all that you value highest. The shock may be too much for you.'

I feared an ebullition of passion from Isabel, but she had learned many a lesson of self-control since I had known her as a girl, and she only looked contemptuous.

'My husband's absence constrains me to bear his sister's insults in silence,' she replied, with an air of dignity; 'and I wish to know nothing that he chooses to keep back from me. Kiss your aunt, Lily, and bid her good-by.' And so parted the sisters.

It was not entirely a melancholy time that Isabel and I passed together during the protracted absence of her husband. The country was so beautiful, and all the elegant appliances of enjoyment which we had at command were so pleasantly new to me, that I found it impossible to resist external influences. Besides, I have a passion for children, and even had I not, I must have loved Isabel's. Baby Bella was a paragon of infantile vigour and beauty, and Lily had all the exquisite tenderness and sweetness of a child destined to but brief probation. To Isabel it was a great relief to have some one with her to whom she could confide all the incidents, faults, and disappointments of her married life, and who never wearied of speculating with her on her chances of reconciliation and happiness. Besides, she was free to follow the bent of her feelings; she had no part to play, no spurious pride to maintain. Mr Lorimer's letters were not of a cheering character; they were cold and reserved in style, and spoke of his business engagements as of a momentous and disastrous character, without further explanation. Isabel seemed strangely indifferent on the subject, except as it might affect her husband's happiness; but I confess I was not so unworldly. I wrote to my brother, and requested him to let me know what rumours were afloat in London respecting the firm of Glitter & Co. The answer I received alarmed me. Hitherto, I had never heard Robert express anything but the most extreme admiration for the vast extent, financial management, and unlimited credit of the establishment; now, he wrote as if it had been from its commencement a huge swindle. He said its solvency was doubted, its credit shaken, its immense wealth a delusion. 'I believe Lorimer is the only moneyed man of the batch, and when the crash comes, as come it will, as far as his means go, he will have to pay the piper. Had he been the prudent man and affectionate husband I thought him, he would have settled that fine estate of his on Isabel and her children at the time of his marriage. If he has not taken the precaution of entailing it, which I very much doubt, he and everything must go to the dogs.' Then followed unreasonable and selfish regrets for his daughter, 'who might have done so much better,' which I spare the reader.

This letter made me miserable. I dared not tell Isabel, for I did not feel at liberty to do so, when her husband kept her in ignorance of his affairs, added to which, I knew not what measure of belief to yield to my brother's statements. There was nothing for it but to wait; but every proof of wealth, every sign of luxury around me, became irksome and intolerable. Poor Lily's tiny pony-chair, with its miniature steed, to procure which, from its native island, no expense or trouble had been spared—even the very baby's lace robes—assumed a melancholy and sinister aspect to my morbid vision. Isabel's costly dresses, of which she was so careless, distressed me; the daily elegance of the table-appointments, gave me a pang. I went about under a cloud, or rather under a painful illumination which I dared not shed on my companion. The ordeal, however, was not destined to last very long. One morning, about a fortnight after I had heard from my brother, Isabel dropped her husband's bi-weekly letter with a sudden exclamation. I looked up, frightened, yet half-relieved at the sight of her pale face and excited manner. Had the crash come? Had he told her? I perceived she had stretched out her hand eagerly for the morning-paper, which still lay unopened on the table; but her agitation bewildered her. She took it up aimlessly, then put it down, and turned again to the letter, which her trembling hand could scarcely hold.

'Isabel, my darling, my poor child!' I cried, going up to her, and kissing her with fervour—'is—is Mr Lorimer well?'

She put the letter in my hand. 'Read it; give me a few minutes, and then come to me, Aunt Sarah;' and she left the room.

Poor girl! she could not but feel it.

Mr Lorimer's letter began as follows:

'I take great blame to myself, Isabel, that I have kept you ignorant of the state of my affairs until the public papers will announce my ruin to the world at large this morning; but I have hoped against hope that this calamity might have been averted, and your peace of mind undisturbed.'

The *Times* of that morning curtly announced that Messrs Glitter of London had stopped payment, and that their liabilities were supposed to be enormous. There was no comment; the public were to wait for detail and criticism.

When I joined Isabel, I found her walking up and down her dressing-room, holding her baby in her arms. She looked comparatively calm, but there was an expression of deep anxiety in her face.

I began at once to enter on the subject, for I wished to harden her for its discussion.

'Now the blow has fallen,' she said, 'I feel it deeply. I feel it chiefly for my husband, who, I imagine, has never contemplated the possibility of being poor. I cannot conceive how he will meet it. If there is any disgrace attending it, it will kill him, for he is a proud man. Aunt Sarah,' she added passionately, 'do you think this trouble will open his heart to me? Do you think he will allow me to love him and console him? There is not a kind word in his letter, not a relenting phrase. Oh! I know how he feels—more bitterly against me than ever, for he thinks he has lost all I loved or cared for.'

'But now, dear child, you will be able to prove your love.'

'How? Have I anything I can give him—any resource for bread-getting? Oh, it *is* hard! Lily, my tender flower, will never thrive as a poor man's child. And I—O aunt, I love wealth and ease dearly, dearly! Poverty will be bitter'—— Her tears choked her.

'Too bitter a price to pay for your husband's love?' I asked.

I had no wish to blame her inconsistency, or reproach her for her lack of heroism. I knew she was shewing me the conflict of her heart, and it seemed to me but a natural one. She was no disciplined, high-minded woman, but a passionate, disappointed girl, shrinking, at first sight, from the trouble which I firmly believed she would, in the end, find strength and courage to endure and overcome.

'Ah! if I dared to hope that,' she murmured, kissing her child, 'I could bear anything. I shall soon know my fate. Oh! how shall I live till to-morrow!'

Her endurance was not exercised so long; that very evening Mr Lorimer arrived unexpectedly by a late train. The day had been wet and chilly, and Isabel had ordered a fire in her dressing-room, over which she and I were sitting in melancholy mood, wearied of the fruitless yet incessant discussion of chances, at the time of his arrival. Isabel sprang up on hearing the sound of his voice in the hall. 'What shall I do?' she exclaimed, clasping her hands. 'I am so afraid of injuring my cause by over-precipitancy, so afraid of being misunderstood—repulsed. How shall I persuade him that I love him?'

'My darling, it seems to me it has become a very easy task.'

We heard his voice approaching in the direction of our room. 'On no account disturb your mistress,' he was saying to Isabel's maid; 'she had no idea I should return to-night.'

Isabel threw open the door, and stood smiling in the entrance, her dress, figure, and lovely face touched with a charming illumination from the blazing pine-logs. I thought what a charming, inviting vision she must appear to the harassed, wearied wanderer coming in from the dark night.

Mr Lorimer stopped abruptly; he did not advance towards her. She had not spoken; but though I could not see the expression of her face, the light fell upon his, and shewed me the intent, searching gaze.

'Maurice, dare I give you a welcome?

She sprang forward, and threw her arms round his neck. Is it possible that he can put her from him without a moment's return of the old love—an involuntary response to the thrilling embrace? Yes; he frees himself gently but coldly, and taking her by the hand, leads her back without a word into the room. He has her now in the full blaze of the fire-light, and he still keeps his hold of her hand—his scrutiny of her face. How altered has his own become; how pale and worn! When he spoke at length, the mingled restraint and anguish of his voice made my heart ache. 'You have not received my letter this morning, Isabel? You are always a careless student of the newspaper? You do not know?'

'Here is your letter; there lies the newspaper. I am sorry, Maurice—I am deeply sorry. I love wealth, as you know; I dread poverty; but if it was the only price at which your faith in me could be bought, I am glad we are poor. I have not always loved you—but I love you now; I have not done my duty hitherto—I will try and do it now. Believe me—help me!'

He turned from her, and covered his face with his hand.

'It is a woman's generosity,' he said; 'the sex's passion for self-sacrifice!'

'It is a woman's passion, a wife's love,' she answered, raising her glowing face. 'Maurice, is it for me to plead?' She made as if she would have knelt before him, and threw her arms round his knees.

I waited just one half-moment to assure myself, with an old woman's love of demonstration, that she did not plead in vain. I saw him raise her in his arms, saw the passionate kiss that sealed the renewed troth, and indistinctly heard, as I flitted away through the dim corridor, the tones of his voice tremulous with more than a lover's fervour.

Three months later, Mr and Mrs Lorimer sailed for Montreal, where the former had a brother established as a merchant. There were not many tears shed by either, for in that time their love and mutual dependence had grown so strong and intimate that no grief seemed intolerable which they shared together. In the arrangement of his affairs, he had been actuated but by one motive—to satisfy every claim as far as the most scrupulous honour dictated, even to the last fraction of his estate. Three hundred a year had been affixed to Isabel by marriage-settlement, but by some legal inadvertency, the deed proved invalid, and her little fortune went in the general wreck. Mr Lorimer regretted the loss, but I know Isabel was glad of it. Her last words as we parted on the deck of the vessel were to me. 'We shall not come back to Old England again,' she said gaily, 'till we have grown rich enough to buy back Morton Leas; so don't fail to let us know when it is in the market.'

This was said ten years ago, and now my old heart beats with the hope of seeing them once more. To-day, I received my periodical letter from Montreal, and what says Isabel?—'We are coming home, Aunt Sarah, to realise my prophecy. Morton Leas *is* in the market, though you have kept a treacherous silence; nay, it is doubtless our own already. Tell my father that Maurice says there shall be no delay in making a rigorous entail of the estate; and how proud shall you and I be, my beloved aunt-mother, to watch our boy flying his kite over his inalienable acres!'

AN HOUR IN A COAL-MINE.

Many men who can walk steadily along a precipice would shun a descent into a coal-mine. The weak-nerved, in these two kinds of enterprise, are influenced by two different kinds of weakness. One man, on glancing down from a craggy path into a ravine far beneath, feels his head 'swim,' his nerves tingle, his muscles tremble; and at such a time he is really in danger, whether the path be broad or narrow; for his nervous system—whatever that mystery may be—exerts an overpowering control over his will. The other man, perchance a good cragsman, dislikes the coal-mine because he cannot *see* his path; he can rely on himself for caution and firmness against visible dangers, but has an uncomfortable distrust of a murky darkness in which his own keen eyes are no more worth than the dimmer sight of a weaker man.

We thought of these things while one day groping along the dark passages of the Lund Hill Colliery. Touching the roof and sides with the finger, we could feel the layer of soot resulting from that terrible explosion which caused so much misery on the 19th of February 1857. Many of the readers of this sheet will perhaps remember that on that day no less than *one hundred and fifty* hapless men and boys lost their lives in the colliery just named. The pit's mouth is in the neighbourhood of Barnsley, and near the Wombwell Station of the South Yorkshire Railway. The men work in three gangs, eight hours each, and of the two hundred who formed the gang which commenced work at six o'clock in the morning of the day in question, not one-fourth came out of the pit alive. About noon, those above ground felt the earth tremble, and heard a smothered sound, which told only too certainly of disaster. Wives left their simple preparations for dinner, children their play, and all hastened to the pit's mouth. There they soon learned that an explosion of such extreme violence had taken place in the mine as to tear away the drawing-ropes, and destroy the apparatus for ascending and descending the shaft. About two o'clock, volumes of smoke issued from the chimney of the ventilating shaft; and an hour later, a magnificent but terrible body of flame shot up therefrom, indicating the ignition of inflammable gases below, and giving heart-sickness to all the lookers on, who thought the while of husbands and fathers, sons and brothers, down in the fiery bowels of the earth. It was a fearful crisis. The mine was evidently on fire; and no one could go down to aid the sufferers. The managers felt the full extent of their responsibility. If they closed up all the shafts and pits' mouths, it might seem like consigning the poor miners to certain destruction; and yet, if they did *not* do so, there was danger of the fire spreading and burning with such intensity as to cause the fall of the bed of coal and superincumbent earth, the consequent falling in of the shafts, and the inextricable loss of the bodies of those below. They hastily called a meeting of colliery owners and other persons in the neighbourhood; and it was not until fortified by the approval of all that the managers decided on closing the shafts, and thus smothering the fire. Before doing so, however, several venturous men descended one of the shafts, rescued nineteen miners who had saved their lives by clustering just at that spot, and then made two hours of exploration under circumstances as frightful as men could well be exposed to: dead bodies, dense volumes of sulphureous smoke, and fiercely blazing masses of coal, were what they came upon in all the avenues and passages. When the dead and the living, so far as they could be found, had been drawn up, the shafts were closed, and the mine flooded with water, to quench the flames. It was a mournful scene when, after the waters had been again drawn off, the charred and soddened corpses were drawn up, one by one, for Christian burial.

Enough of this. No one has ever known how the disaster occurred; but every available precaution has since been taken, and the Lund Hill Mine is now well ventilated and carefully tended.

Most persons a little acquainted with the geology of our island are aware that South Yorkshire contains one of our coal-fields, which extends into the neighbouring counties of Nottingham and Derby. Some geologists think that it is continuous with the coal-field of Northumberland and Durham, the beds in the intervening region being overlaid by masses of magnesian limestone. The strata range from north to south, and dip from the west towards the east. The 'coal-measures' (or strata) of a coal-field are numerous layers of different kinds of rock and clay, with thin layers of coal between them. Those in South Yorkshire comprise gritstone, shale or clay-slate, bind or indurated loam, clunch or indurated clay, and an argillaceous rock called crow-stone. Between and among these are no fewer than *thirty* beds, seams, veins, or strata of coal. They vary from six inches to eleven feet in thickness, and are supposed by some authorities to present an aggregate of nearly thirty yards of thickness altogether. All these coal-layers are nearly but not quite horizontal; they have a slight descending gradient, as railway engineers would call it, from the west towards the east. Slight as this gradient is, however, it has the effect of bringing the coal-layers almost up to the surface of the ground in some places, and of plunging them to great depths in others.

Now, here we see what are the questions which a coal-digger has to solve. Are the seams thick enough to be workable, and to pay for the working? Is the quality of coal good enough for the market? Is the seam of coal so far beneath the surface as to render operations unprofitable by reason of the great cost? Coal-mines differ one from another according to the way in which these questions can be answered. The deepest coal-pit in England is, we believe, nearly 2000 feet in depth; it can only be worked profitably because the seam of coal is very thick and very rich. Some seams, on the other hand, although near the surface, are so slender in thickness and poor in quality, that they barely pay the expenses of working.

At Lund Hill, the depth is about 500 feet; and we will imagine the reader to be accompanying us in the descent. All around the surface-works are indications of coal—coal-heaps, coal-trucks on railways, coal-screening, coal-weighing, coal being drawn up from gaping pits, coal-trucks being wheeled along stone-floors, coal platforms and vessels drawn up by steam-power, coal-miners coming up nearly as black as chimney-sweepers, coal-miners' wives and children—— But, no; these latter are *not* always black and dirty; the women are decently and comfortably clad; and the children—flaxen-haired in great proportion—are more fresh and rosy-faced than one could well expect to find in this region of carbon. The little toddling things are certainly no worse in health and cleanliness than those in the majority of our agricultural villages—indeed, we suspect that they are richer in these two treasures. The cottages, small and plain, are tidy within compared with much that meets the eye in the great centres of industry. When these upper-ground works have been watched, we accomplish that very easy manœuvre—the 'descent;' we step upon an iron platform, hold by a rail or bar to insure steadiness, and down we go, losing daylight more and more every second, until nothing is left but pitchy darkness. A great change this from old times. Ladders were then used for the ascent and descent of the persons employed, even if machinery were used for drawing up the corves or trucks laden with coal. In some of the tin and lead mines of Cornwall these ladders are still in use, and likewise in some of the shallow coal-mines; but the mine-owners are getting more and more into the habit of employing steam-power, to save their people from this terrible leg-work. The shaft is sometimes circular in section, sometimes quadrangular; at Lund Hill, it is the latter. The iron platform works in grooves, which run down the sides of the shaft, suspended by chains or ropes worked by a steam-engine; it is large enough to hold two coal-trucks, or one truck and three or four men, or six or eight men. The descent is rapid and regular, and is chiefly remarkable for the singular way in which daylight appears to die out.

The platform being lowered to the bottom, we step off, and are then in a coal-mine. We are told so, at least, for we can see nothing, except some little specks of light set in blackness, rendering darkness still more visible. The eye takes some time to become accustomed to this state of things; but when, after being supplied with a candle or lamp, we commence groping, we find ourselves in an avenue or passage, leading apparently into 'infinite space;' and gradually we learn how the height of these passages depends on the thickness of the seam. The principal seam now being worked at Lund Hill is below the height of an ordinary man, and bounded above and below by a kind of clay-slate not used for any particular purpose. The coal itself is dug out by picks and other tools, shovelled into trucks, and removed. But this digging is a process in which the skill of an overlooker is constantly needed. Let us suppose that a seam of coal, four feet thick, extends over a square mile in one colliery; all the coal is worth obtaining; yet, if all were obtained, the superincumbent weight would cause the roof of the mine to fall in; hence the plan is adopted of cutting the coal in avenues, say, six or eight feet wide, crossing each other like the pattern of a piece of check, and leaving square blocks between the several avenues. These square blocks support the roof, with the aid of timbers here and there. The blocks might be nearly all removed, if the timbers were numerous and strong, and skilfully arranged; and hence it is a matter for practical experience to determine how much timber, how much coal, shall be made to render this necessary service. Some coal-owners, more grasping than prudent, cut away much coal, and put in little timber; then comes a crash. And sometimes it happens that deserted coal-mines fall in, playing sad pranks with the miners' houses on the open ground above; this occurs in South Staffordshire, which is completely honey-combed beneath by coal and iron mines.

Wandering on for an hour or so in these darksome passages, we become familiar, one by one, with the numerous peculiar arrangements for working the mine. There is the vertical shaft, cutting down through various strata, and laying bare two or three seams of coal. There are the galleries or passages cut into these seams, and branching in various directions; some are called *bords*, some *headways;* some are horizontal, and some follow the dip of the strata; but all alike are intended to facilitate the working of the coal, and the movement of it to the shaft up which it is to be raised. There is the steam-machinery for pumping up the water which gradually collects in the mine. There is the very 'narrow-gauge' railway laid down on the floor of each avenue, and the trucks which run upon those rails. There are the extensive and costly arrangements for ventilation—a *downcast* shaft through which pure air may be sent; passages and doors for directing this air through every crevice and cranny of the mine; an *upcast* shaft for the ascent of the impure air; and a large fire, burning day and night at the bottom of this shaft, for creating a draught, and thus sucking the foul air from all parts of the mine to that one spot. There are the miners with their candles, extricating the coal from the bed in which it has lain for unknown ages; and their assistants, lading the trucks with the coal; and the drawers—boys sometimes, horses at other times, according to the size of the passages—propelling these trucks along the tram-ways.

The reader will not suppose that these facts all come to light at once. The exploration is verily a 'pursuit of knowledge under difficulties.' The passages are seldom so high as a man, and hence the journey must be made in a stooping position. Here is a beam over us, and a smart blow on the head gives warning to stoop lower; here is a lump of something under foot, over which we stumble; here is a hollow sound, which tells that 'Dobbin' is dragging a little train of coals, but we cannot see him by the glimmer of a few candles in the darkness, and are doubtful whether or not he will run over us; here is a splashing under foot, which tells of puddles not yet thoroughly drained. The odour is 'of the earth, earthy,' modified by that of tallow-candles and oil-lamps; and there is something in the sound of echoing footsteps and echoing handicraft operations, quite unlike that which one meets with above ground. As to the degree of visibility, we have already indicated its nature; the sides, and walls, and floor of every passage are so black, so dull black, that scarcely any rays of light are reflected to the eye; and the candles flitting about appear like bright specks in a measureless darkness. Matters are not quite so bad, however, at the remote ends of the several passages, where the working is going on; here the lacklustre shale and clunch are in near neighbourhood to the bright bituminous coal, which sends forth glancing rays reflected from the candle-light. It is at such a time and place that good coal seems best to deserve the name of 'black diamonds.' If it be the dinner-hour, we come up against the men, sitting or lolling upon the heaps of coals, with very little clothing and very much coal-dust upon their bodies; and if we cannot well understand their talk, it is no wonder, for it is the miners' technical language ingrafted upon the Yorkshire dialect. But they are a simple, honest, hard-working race of men, retaining many of the primitive characteristics of old times. They work, we have said, in shifts of eight hours each, which is found to be quite long enough for hard muscular labour in a stooping position, five hundred feet away from the light of day.

Let us be thankful that one terrible blot is removed from us—the working of women and girls in these black holes. As small boys were wont in past days to be sent up chimneys, because the passages were too small for men, so were boys, girls, and young women sent into those working-parts of coal-mines which were too shallow for full-grown men—and also for another reason, because the wages paid were lower. If a seam of coal be only two or three feet in thickness, the mining is very laborious work. In some pits, the men can only work lying down, handling their picks sideways, in a most awkward manner. But it was in conveying the coal, when loosened, along these shallow passages to the shaft, that the employment of young females was so distressingly shewn. No horse or pony could stand upright in such shallow passages, and therefore manual power was necessary to drive the corves of coal along the passages; and as the young persons were equally unable to stand upright, they went on all-fours, like quadrupeds. Those were terrible pictures which illustrated the Report of the Mining Commissioners eighteen or twenty years ago—pictures representing girls almost arrived at womanhood, and almost in a state of nudity, walking on all-fours, dragging trucks laden with coals along passages barely three feet in height, by means of chains and belts fastened round the waist, and passing between the legs! Seldom have women been reduced so nearly to the level of beasts. Foreigners pointed in bitter scorn to those pictures, and taunted us with our boasted civilisation. There were some mines in which girls and women descended the shaft by ladders from the surface; walked along passages three or four feet high, to the workings; took on their necks and shoulders creels containing from one to three hundredweights of coal; secured these creels by straps passing round their foreheads; bent their bodies till the creels—something like cockle-shells in shape—assumed a horizontal position; hung their lamps or candles to the forehead strap; and walked painfully along shallow passages, and up ladders, until they reached the shaft, where they emptied the coal into tubs to be drawn up by machinery. It was mournful work; and sometimes the forehead strap would break, and the coal would be precipitated on girls lower down on the same ladder. But the worst features of this are past. Since 1843, no females, whether girls or women, are allowed to be employed down coal-mines; no boys are to be employed under ten years of age; and the coal-owners are bound to admit inspectors at all times, to see that the shafting, the pit-work, the ventilation, and the treatment of the boys employed, are in accordance with the law.

The groping on hands and feet is still necessary in some collieries, for there is no other way yet known in which shallow seams of good coal can be worked and carried. At the Lund Hill Colliery, the seams are not *very* shallow; miners must stoop, and visitors must stoop; but where there is room for 'Dobbin' to walk along in his daily labours, we know that the state of affairs is not very bad.

This mine, together with two others in the neighbourhood, called *Edmund Main* and *The Oaks*, belong to one of the many companies which find their chief customers at the King's Cross Station. The reader is possibly aware that the Great Northern Railway Company has rendered good service by organising a coal-trade between South Yorkshire and the metropolis. The rails extend without a break from the pits' mouths to King's Cross; and by calculating on the basis of a large trade at small profits, the coal-owners and the railway company have succeeded in familiarising the Londoners with a kind and price of coal unattainable in the old 'sea-coal' days. But the great advantage has been the lowering of price of the sea-borne coal. The Northumberland and Durham coal-owners had formerly quite, or nearly, a monopoly of the London supply; they charged high; and if a severe winter or contrary winds prevented the coal-ships from reaching the Thames in proper time, the retail-price rose to forty, or even fifty shillings a ton. Those days are past. A railway-train can work nearly as well in winter as in summer. If the shippers from the Tyne, Wear, and Tees are too grasping, the Great Northern will give them a hint by underselling them; if the Great Northern is too proud of its South Yorkshire coal, the North-Western will come in with its Derbyshire and Lancashire; if the North-Western is not humble enough in its demands, the Great Western is ready with its Ruabon and Dean Forest and South Wales coal; and thus Londoners benefit by a healthy rivalry. What a mighty subject is this coal-supply of the metropolis! Let the reader imagine, if he can, a consumption of *four millions and a half of tons* every year. This quantity would form a pillar a hundred feet square, and four times as high as St Paul's; it would form a roadway from London to Edinburgh twenty feet wide and three feet deep; it would wind round the whole earth in a band a yard wide by four inches thick—or it would do many other strange things which a schoolboy with slate and pencil could easily calculate.

CARLO THE ABSCONDED.

I.

My uncle Scrymgeour (by marriage) enjoys the singular good-fortune of being 'much and universally respected,' while he is yet living and looking upon the earth, and living well and looking exceedingly healthy too. He is not a very good-tempered person; indeed, with the exception of Mr Carlyle's Frederick's father and the late Mrs Brownrigg of the *Newgate Calendar*, I know of no such domestic tyrant, either in ancient or modern times. And he is certainly not a generous person: the only substantial proof of his regard for his niece—my consort—consisting of a copy of the libretto of an opera, which failed on its first night, some fourteen years ago, and has never been acted since. It is much dog-leaved; could not possibly have cost more than sixpence at any time, even if my uncle did not pick it up at a far more reasonable figure; and has written in a conspicuous manner upon one of its outside pages the words, 'No use to Alexander Scrymgeour.' But the less extravagant this old gentleman is *now*, reflect his discerning relatives, the more he must needs have to give away at last; and the less he bestows upon us in particular, reason they, the greater will surely be the compensatory legacy attached to our name in the final codicil. I am not so perfectly certain of the accuracy of this last conclusion as I could wish; but certainly if Uncle Scrymgeour's posthumous benefits to myself and Jemima are to be in inverse ratio to his favours while in the flesh, we two ought to be a rich couple after all. Why, that most unsatisfactory old reprobate—and I should like that word to stand, however ill-chosen it may seem, since it will afford me an unspeakable pleasure to see it in print—why, that felonious old Scrymgeour, I say, has cost me more time and money in gratifying his whims, than I have ever thought it right to expend on my own personal comforts. The day he dines with us is the herald of a week's destitution; and when he comes to stay with us—and those periods are by no means Angels' Visits in any sense—we could not take more care about letting him take his own line, or make more fuss about crossing him, if he were the Equator himself. 'I have been in all quarters of the world for my part,' says he, 'and there is nothing in the shape of food that I don't like. Any sort of white soup suffices *me;* and provided the salmon be fresh, you may cut it thick or thin, for all I care. Pray, don't put yourselves out about side-dishes for an old traveller; just a little curry, perhaps, or an oyster *pâté* before my meat; and then with a woodcock, or any little gamey bird of that kind to finish with, Alec Scrymgeour is content. Not but that a kickshaw of apricot-tart or so before the cheese is wholesome; but you will never hear me complain if I don't get it. No, no, nephew, I have been in every corner of the globe, sir, and I know how to rough it as well as most people.'

Considering his advantages as a traveller, he has brought very few specimens home of the wonderful things he talks about. Once, indeed, he was very nearly giving to us a unique shell which he had picked up, he said, on the coast of Patagonia—the twin brother to which I found on Margate sands in the same year—but he couldn't quite bring himself to part with it, and eventually carried it away in a pill-box wrapped up in cotton wool. He is one of that mysterious band who are said to be 'connected with the Commissariat.' His real title is of quite an amazing length—Deputy-Acting-Assistant-Commissary-General Scrymgeour; but, from motives of modesty, or to save the footman such a tremendous mouthful, he is accustomed to have himself announced in drawing-rooms as General Scrymgeour only. The last scene of his professional labours was in certain out-of-the-way districts of British North America. He is what is provincially termed 'ordinary-looking' (our nursemaid even says 'sinful ordinary,' meaning a *very* plain man) as we see him in Christian apparel; but when attired in his Canadian costume, he presents an unusually captivating appearance. 'Sir,' said he, when speaking of the latter dress, 'I give you my honour that when in my skins, and claws, and cap made of the fur of the gray fox, you would not know Alexander Scrymgeour from a polar bear.' He was good enough to appear in this attire in our drawing-room one evening, quite unexpectedly, with results that may even now be serious to my Jemima; but my eldest boy, on the same occasion, exhibited all his father's intelligence and courage by presenting the supposed monster with a muffin at the end of a toasting-fork, after the manner which he had seen practised so successfully in the Zoological Gardens.

When I say Uncle Scrymgeour never brought anything back from foreign parts with him—nothing 'to shew for it,' as my wife somewhat obscurely though tersely expresses it—I especially except his last North American mission. He brought back something to shew for *that* with a vengeance, in the shape (only greatly magnified) of an enormous Newfoundland dog. This animal was, I will stake my professional reputation, at least *so high*—I am holding my hand about 5 feet 8 inches from the ground; with a head more than three times the size of the skull of the Welsh giant, presented to my grandfather by the ever-to-be-regretted Hunter, over the bookcase in my study. If he were ever to lose his coat—which I hope may never happen, for he would then indeed be terrible to look upon—it would take four ordinary railway rugs to clothe him at the very least. To give a general idea of his size by comparison with living objects, he was exactly the same altitude as dear Jemima, exclusive of the culminating knob of her back hair. I have (with great satisfaction) seen him whisk his tail, which reminds me of the plume upon the enchanted helmet in the Castle of Otranto, right into Uncle Scrymgeour's eye, as he sat at table, and he is a sort of man that sits high too. He walks over my children as they play without inconveniencing either himself or them; they perceive that an opaque body is passing between them and the sun, and that is all. He is the Great Eastern of Dogs, in short, and ought not to belong to a private person, but to a Company with limited liability. His name is Carlo, but he doesn't answer to it, nor, indeed, pay the slightest attention to anything that is said to him. He is, providentially, exceedingly affable and peaceful, otherwise the question would have to be decided as to whether himself or the Human Race should become extinct; but what he wants to have, he takes. It is best, indeed, to anticipate his wishes as much as possible.

On one occasion, we foolishly imagined that Carlo might wait for his dinner until we had dined, especially as it was Sunday, and we were dining early upon a simple joint; but he convinced us of our mistake in an unanswerable manner. Our dinner didn't come up stairs. We sent Eliza to see what the cook was about with the leg of mutton, and she rushed back within the minute with a face as pale as ashes to say that, as true as it was Sunday, the dog had eaten the cook. 'I see'd him,' sobbed she, 'a-gnawing at her very bones.' My wife said it was 'impossible,' as ladies always do when any great misfortune has happened, but I did not share her confidence by any means. Uncle Scrymgeour cautiously confined himself to saying, that he had never known the animal do anything of the kind, since *he* had had him. We proceeded to the kitchen with a hot poker and a dog-whip, so as to be ready for either aggressive or persuasive measures, and there was the gigantic Carlo blocking up the passage of the door, with an enormous bone at his side, very perfectly licked, and no sign of the poor cook whatever. Following the direction of his eyes, however, we perceived her up among the beams where the bacon was hanging, and in perfect security. She had climbed up thither by an effort almost supernatural, and declined to descend until the object of her terrors was removed. She said that she had just dished the leg of mutton, when Carlo walked solemnly in and ate it up, and then sat down at the kitchen-door, as we saw him, waiting for *her*.

'Pooh, pooh,' said Uncle Scrymgeour, 'it's nothing of the sort; the poor dog only wants his pudding.' Perhaps it was so, but still the thing was very annoying. When my children have a biscuit given to them, Carlo walks up to them, shaking the floor, and extorts it merely by the tremendous character of his personal appearance. He never growls, but his yawn is like the fortifications of Cherbourg—'a standing menace;' and I am thankful to say that he never barks, for if he did so, the concussion would, like the firing of Mons Meg, break every window in the neighbourhood.

This animal being, therefore, such as I have feebly endeavoured to portray, our satisfaction may be imagined when Uncle Scrymgeour announced his intention of leaving him with us, one Saturday, for a few days, while he himself paid a visit to some other fortunate relative.

'Just see that he is regularly fed, and has enough to eat,' observed he as he went away; 'and mind he sleeps quite comfortably, and on no account omit to take him out for an airing at least once a day, and you need not trouble yourself about him any further. Only be sure,' these were Uncle Scrymgeour's last words, 'that nothing comes near the dog to hurt him (as if a rhinoceros was likely to get into our back-green), and never keep your eye off him for a moment, lest you should lose him; for if anything should happen to that dog, I could never forgive you to my dying day.'

If those words had been all Uncle Scrymgeour meant, I would have poisoned the noble animal in question, as soon as looked at him; indeed, sooner, for I should have liked, of all things, to have been unforgiven by the old reprobate *to* his dying day, if he would have only recollected me *upon* it. But what he said implied, as I well knew, a reference to 'that something after death,' which the poet speaks of as having so important an influence over human action—namely, the old gentleman's will.

'How lucky it is we have got a kennel for the beast,' remarked Jemima, as she kissed her hand affectionately to the cab of her departing relative: 'it shan't sleep in that nice room down stairs any more—the nasty thing—*he* may just depend upon it,' added she, still nodding pleasantly at the vehicle lessening in the distance.

'He depends upon just the contrary,' remarked I, grimly, whereupon we both laughed aloud with the sense of recovered freedom, and the power of paying-out, even vicariously, the common oppressor. A shadow fell darkly over us as we did so, and a portentous yawn informed us that the tremendous animal had been a witness, and perhaps even an intelligent listener, to our conversation.

'Poor doggy, poor dear doggy,' said my wife, hypocritically, for she was exceedingly afraid of the monster—'he shall have a nicey picey kennel to-night all to his own self!'

'And even then,' observed I, 'he will not find it too large for him: it was a tight fit for our poor little Towser; and as for Carlo's getting in at the door of it, you might as well try to put the Britannia-tube into a telescope case.'

'Never you mind,' said Jemima, in a low tone, and looking out of window, as though the weather were her topic of conversation; 'we don't measure the beds before we put our guests into them, do we? How should *we* know but what the kennel would be perfectly comfortable? Now, do you take the creature out, and let me get our ornaments back again—those at least which he has not already broken with his horrid tail—and make the sitting-rooms habitable once more. I guess my gentleman will never put one of his feet into *them* again, till his master comes back, at all events. Ugh, take him away!'

I therefore attached myself to an enormous brazen collar which enclosed the animal's neck, and on which Deputy-Acting-Assistant-Commissary-General Scrymgeour's titles were blazoned, and sallied out with him for his first constitutional walk.

I suppose no natural historian has ever been favoured with the advantages, which (without greatly appreciating them) I had conferred upon me during that Saturday afternoon's ramble with the gigantic Carlo. He took me about with him like a post to which he had been ineffectually tied, and that he had carried bodily away with him, to examine every object interesting to his canine intelligence. Up alleys innumerable; down area steps, where we had no sort of business to go; into unsavoury mewses, where the Nine were represented by Skittles, or Cocks and Hens; up to cab-stands, placing me in a false position with regard to the drivers, and exposing me to derision and insult; into butchers' shops, where I uttered my warnings oftentimes too late, and after Carlo had secured some bloody trophy, which he devoured with calmness and dignity; through groups of screaming nurse-maidens and children, and past policemen, who did not dare to interfere; in ridiculous pursuit of other members of the canine family who attracted his roving fancy; and once, in a hostile excursion in pursuit of a bull-dog, who, with the characteristic audacity of his race, had walked with straight determined legs up to Carlo's very jaws, and then had made off panic-stricken, at fullest speed, as well he might. My position was not only painful and degrading in a very high degree, but threatened to be too much for my bodily strength. I wanted to take Carlo home, and he would not go. A crowd of some two or three hundred persons—chiefly boys and dog-fanciers—pursued me at a respectful distance whithersoever I went. Public opinion, as I heard it very openly expressed, was divided as to whether I was an advertisement to a menagerie then exhibiting in the neighbourhood of the town, or whether I was shewing off the dog to the best advantage for my own private profit, with a view to its sale. Some simple persons applauded me, under the impression that I had thrown myself upon the ungovernable animal, and was restraining it for the sake of the public safety; others assured me, that if any accident should happen, such as the devouring of a child or other valuable, I myself would certainly be held responsible. Sometimes the crowd would press upon us pretty closely, but if Carlo did but turn his head, would retire in billowy masses, executing that brilliant Rifle Volunteer movement called Higgledy Piggledy, the front ranks tumbling over those behind. However, I did at last succeed in getting home with my precious charge. I spent the remains of a physical energy, which had never before been so severely tasked, in dragging him up the steps that lead to our main-door. I left him in the hall for half a minute before introducing him to the outside of his impracticable kennel; it was not more than half a minute, I am prepared to take my affidavit—for I had but just swallowed a couple of glasses of London Stout—when I heard the front-door re-open, a sort of hurtling noise as of a tremendous body flying outwards, and a shriek of agony from Jemima, which convinced me that the dread animal had made his escape.

My wife had come in with the pass-key, and Carlo had rushed past her into the gloaming before she could close the latch, or say—if she had been inclined to say anything so inapt and irrational—'Jack Robinson,' or 'Who'd have thought it.'

II.

I have never read of any situation, either of real life or the melodrama, equal in intensity of horror to mine. The student who, having imparted vitality to the monster Frankenstein, saw it take itself off from his scientific apartments for the first time, may have felt indeed equally responsible for its actions; but then there was no Uncle Scrymgeour, as in my case, to return upon the ensuing Thursday, and demand his missing property. I rushed into the darkening street, and looked around in all directions, but perceived nothing but a man upon a ladder. I naturally imagined this to be some individual seeking safety by that ingenious method from the tremendous quadruped of which I was in search, but he turned out to be a lamplighter. 'Had he seen a dog *so high?*' I inquired, indicating about five feet eleven or so, to allow for the foreshortening, since the man was considerably above me.

'No, he hadn't; and, what was more (I use the very words of the vulgar creature), he didn't believe as *I* had either.'

At any other time, to have doubted my word would have been dangerous, for I am notorious for my chivalric disposition; but my mind was in too depressed a condition to resent an insult. I passed down the street in the opposite direction, and reiterated my inquiry to a small boy trundling a hoop. He replied: 'No, sir,' very respectfully; but as soon as he had got a little distance, screamed out 'something in a very shrill voice, which I know better than to repeat in these pages. Suffice it to say, that the insignificant atom imagined me to be the worse for liquor. Nobody, then, had seen the gigantic Carlo, who had yet not left my door above a minute and a half. Was it possible, then, that he was that Phantom Dog so continually quoted by the writers upon Indigestion? No; for I remembered the leg of mutton, and the day we went without our Sunday-dinner.

'Jemima,' said I, re-entering the house with a haggard air, 'I want three pounds, if you please, and one of them in silver.'

My consort, who keeps the purse, demurred to this a good deal.

'My dear,' observed I, with the calmness of desperation, 'are you prepared to give up our chance of thirty thousand, and having suffered such things as we have already done from that Deputy, Acting, Ass'——

She gave up the money before I finished the sentence, and I went out into the desolate night in pursuit of the missing monster.

The Adventures of a Gentleman in Search of a Horse have been already written, and have enjoyed a great 'run,' as the phrase is; *The Adventures of a Gentleman in Search of a Dog* are now about to be written, and will deserve a similar success. I am sure that *I* had had a great 'run' after the animal in question, although I cannot say that I enjoyed it. I took my way in as speedy a cab as I could procure to the chief police-office. It was fairly evening when I arrived there, but there was still a little left of that crowd which always hangs around its interesting precincts. From my haste and excited air, they conjectured, doubtless, it was a murder case, and as many of them as had no special reasons against venturing thither followed me into the office. I stated my distressing case with, I daresay, some little flurry and indistinctness, and the principal policeman made me answer him a few categorical questions, while he took down my replies in writing in an enormous ledger. I immediately felt as if I had committed myself, and began to appreciate the feelings of any gentleman who is placed in a perpendicular box and submitted to investigation.

'About what size is the Newfoundland dog in question?'

'About so high,' replied I, indicating the required altitude.

The spectators began to giggle, and the Civil Force to rub their intelligent noses with incredulity and their forefingers; the principal policeman regarded me with doubt through his silver spectacles, and whispered to one of his subordinates.

'I can't put "so high" down in the ledger,' said he presently; 'it's like the carpenter's expression of "about the size of a piece of chalk."'

'The dog is five feet eight, if it's an inch,' said I indignantly.

'You believe it to be lost?' inquired my interrogator insinuatingly.

'No, sir, I do not,' replied I; 'it is impossible that so huge an animal should be lost; if at least there is any meaning in the English language.'

'Ah! then you have reason to believe it stolen, have you?'

'It cannot have been stolen,' replied I with confidence, 'for no human being could have taken it where it did not wish to go.'

'Good Heavens!' exclaimed the principal policeman, laying down his pen, 'what a very remarkable charge this is! Shall I write that the dog is *missing*, perhaps that will suit you?'

'I rather think,' said I, 'that *absconded* would be the better word.' The principal policeman shook his head, however, as he wrote down the unaccustomed term in the big book.

'Now, look here,' said I, for I had become accustomed to my position, and began to understand why culprits feel it a relief sometimes to cast their shoes at the examining magistrate—'I don't want this to be a paper-inquiry only.'

The principal policeman frowned, the inferior policemen coughed behind their hands to express dissatisfaction, while signs of uncontrollable amusement manifested themselves in the crowd behind me.

'Money,' continued I, 'is no object—none whatever.'

The principal policeman's brow relaxed perceptibly, the inferior policemen removed their hands and smiled, and a voice from the crowd (whose proprietor was incontinently delivered up by the rest, and turned out of the office) exclaimed: 'O my!' in accents of admiration.

'I don't care what I give, but I must have that dog back; that's what I mean.'

'Ah!' said the principal policeman, in a tone of sympathy, 'it's a friend's dog, is it? That makes it so much the more annoying; a dear and valued friend's?'

'Exactly,' said I, not caring to explain what I privately thought of Uncle Scrymgeour; 'and he's worth his weight in gold to him' (which would, indeed, have been about half a ton of it). 'It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that every engine'—I thought this sounded like an official phrase, and so I used it—'that every engine should be put in motion.'

'You would wish inquiry to be made at the railway stations, at the turnpike-gates, and at all the outlets of the city, in fact?'

'I should wish, if possible, that the traffic of the city be entirely suspended until that dog is found,' returned I, assentingly.

'His master's name is on the collar, you say?'

'Yes,' said I, with confidence, 'a very great number of his names.'

'Then,' rejoined the principal policeman, after many other inquiries, 'you may rely on this description being read to every policeman upon duty this evening, and, in short, on every means being taken to—— By the by, what is the name of the—the—absconded animal?'

'Carlo.'

'The dog answers to the name of Carlo,' said the principal policeman, reading what he had finally written down in the great book.

'No, he doesn't,' replied I; 'his name is Carlo, but he doesn't answer to it at all.'

'Good Heavens!' cried the bewildered inquisitor, 'this is the *most* extraordinary charge'——

'It's the most extraordinary dog,' interrupted I, 'I do assure you; and now that every precaution has been taken your ingenuity can suggest, I want a Detective, if you please, to accompany me personally over the town. Yes,' continued I, observing the looks of astonishment interchanged among the Civil Force, 'I do not mean to close these eyes until they behold the missing animal.'

A wise and trusty official was subsequently despatched with me upon this errand, and I also took with me an intelligent medical friend, who devotes his mind for the present to analytical investigations of any kind rather than to patients; he was also in want of a fancy dog for scientific purposes, with which he thought such an excursion might supply him.

It was my first night among the dog-stealers, and I may very possibly be judging them too hastily, but they certainly seemed to me a race of persons unintelligent, or at least exceedingly reserved. They looked ill-pleased and surly, as men might be expected to look who have the taste of puppy-dogs' tails never out of their mouths, and they all averred that they 'knowed nothink about e'er a dog' such as we described. There was, indeed, but one house where anything remarkable took place at all. My friend was informed that a white terrier pup might there be seen, if such a wonder was likely to suit him, the flower of a litter of brown ones, all fine in their way, and constituting, perhaps, the principal wealth of their proprietor. This man was a quiet, almost gentlemanly dog-stealer, and therefore his subsequent conduct astonished us all the more. He had descended through a trap in the floor—not practicable for Carlo, and therefore presenting no opening at all for *my* requirements—to fetch the puppy, but almost immediately returned with the terrier mother instead. There was a strange look in the man's face as he came up the ladder with the dog in his arms, and the next moment he had dashed the poor animal's head against the wall, and slain it, before we could interfere in the least. It was a brutal murder committed by a man who yet was evidently by no means a brute by nature. His wife and children, who had hitherto remained in some dark closet, rushed out from their concealment to sob and moan over the corpse of their favourite, the staff of their house, the producer of their most valuable goods. Nor did the lady omit to fling some passion-flowers of reproach over the body of the defunct, and at her penitent husband, as he stood ashamed and horrified at his own act. 'I couldna help it,' said he; 'see what the wretched thing has done to her ain bairn!' He drew from his pocket the little white pup upon which he had set such store, all stiff and cold, with the marks of its mother's teeth in its lily neck.

It was really a dreadful, and even affecting sight, although we managed to soothe the family a good deal before we left by purchasing the poor little white pup after all; for though we could not revive him, we could put him, of course, into spirits. I confess I could not help wishing that Carlo had had a mother equally capricious, and this set me moralising so deeply upon the apparently perverse dispensations of Fortune, that I found myself in a public-house before I was aware, and drinking a glass of punch. It was a bitter cold wind, and the 'early-closing' (Saturday) movement was at hand, so that there was every excuse for us, and particularly as our night-work was by no means over yet. We had now to visit the outside canine establishments, those arches mistermed 'dry' in the suburban neighbourhoods, which, by the help of a few boards and a padlock, afford to philanthropic dog-fanciers such admirable accommodation for lost animals. No proprietor could himself be got to exhibit these interesting repositories; but a personal friend of one of them—or who had been a friend until 'whispering tongues' or other separating cause had estranged him—engaged, after much persuasion, to shew us these mysterious caves. He had many scruples; but not more than he would exchange for a dram; and he got it, and led the way.

Where railways were intended to be made, or had been made and failed; where carcasses of houses, needing no skeleton-key to open them, kept watch over bleak common-land; where wooden outhouses and 'lean-tos' at the back of filthy 'rows' and 'places' threatened to fall to pieces with every blast of the October wind—on these the bull's-eye of our investigation was turned again and again. It fell upon goats of evil odour and ragged beards; upon donkeys with clipped tails and mangy backs; on now and then a pale horse, who, if he bore not Death outside of him, most certainly carried him within; on insufficiently feathered fowls and bantams with draggled tails; on fancy rabbits crowding so closely together that their long ears interlaced, with little else but fancy to keep them warm; and on dogs of every description—except the fat ones—but still there was not one trace of Carlo the Absconded.

The next day was the Sabbath, but it was no day of rest to me or mine. The moving throngs of people without dogs had no interest for me, nor had the preacher any consolation; once only during his discourse did my veins throb and my pulses tingle for an instant; it was when he observed, in a solemn and deprecating voice: 'Turn that big dog out of the church, will you?' But, alas! it was not Carlo, who, indeed, could have picked up few church tendencies from my Uncle Scrymgeour. Half that day, I am ashamed to say, I was mentally occupied in composing an advertisement for the newspapers. The whole of the next I was engaged in seeing the advertisees. Scores of persons, it seemed, had each of them, curiously enough, found a dog of about so high, on Saturday evening; and were all of them honest folks who had kept it, at a great expense to themselves, until it should be claimed by the rightful owner. The coincidence was the more remarkable, as, though none of the dogs were in the least like *my* dog, they were all (as I was informed) named Carlo, and yet (as I discovered for myself) did not answer to that name.

With agonising slowness, but with the sureness which is peculiar to time and taxes, the awful Thursday morning at last approached. Uncle Scrymgeour was about to arrive, and find no faithful quadruped to bid him welcome. We arrayed ourselves in sombre-coloured garments, and strove to impart a tender melancholy to our demeanour, which might break the news of his great loss to our relative, and incline his martial, or at least his commissariat soul to pity. I waited upon the top step of our main-door flight from the hour at which the train was due that was to bring him. That train, it mercifully happened, was behind its time. At last I beheld the cab which contained my uncle, or rather, which contained half of him, for he was craning out of window, as his custom is, and poking at the driver with his umbrella, in order to impress upon him, for the fifth time or so, the exact place at which he was to stop. At the same time, I caught sight of a blessed vision appearing in another direction. I beheld Carlo, looking even larger than life, and dragging a feeble young man along with him by his collar—I mean by Carlo's collar—up my street. The two quadrupeds, the dog and the cab-horse, arrived at my door at the same instant. I seized upon the larger animal, bestowed upon the young man attached to him a sovereign (the promised reward in the advertisement), and bade him return to-morrow at the same hour. It would never have done for Uncle Scrymgeour to have heard the long tissue of fabrications which, I saw in the lad's weak eyes, he had got ready to tell me.

'What on earth, nephew, did you give that fellow a sovereign for?'

'My dear uncle,' replied I, in an undemonstrative sort of tone in which affection seemed to be struggling with respect, 'the amount may seem large to you, but not to me. That boy, slim as he looks, is exceedingly agile, and is indeed the only lad in this town who can be safely intrusted with this noble dog of yours. Do you think I could risk the chance, the possibility of loss or misadventure of any kind to anything that *you* valued, uncle? I think not. What are sovereigns when weighed in the balance with your comfort and serenity of mind! That lad has had the sole charge, as I believe, of the dog's constitutional walks ever since—— But here is Jemima. She has been in a most anxious state, I do assure you, sir, ever since you have been away, lest the noble animal should have come to any harm. My dear, your uncle is good enough to express himself pleased at finding Carlo so well taken care of.'— And I have every reason to believe that the old gentleman will die in that simple faith, and leave us his money.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

OWING to the necessity for writing this monthly article some time before publication, the name of a chief of engineering science appeared in our last as acting on a scientific commission, when he was lying in his tomb, among famous men and kings, in Westminster Abbey. Since the last anniversary meeting of the Royal Society on St Andrew's Day 1858, twenty-five names have disappeared from their list of Fellows, and among them are those of Robert Stephenson and Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

The commission above referred to have completed their task, and will shortly publish their report on the best form of submarine telegraph.—In connection therewith we may mention that Mr Wheatstone's newly invented telegraphic instruments and signal apparatus are to be used by the expedition now on its way to China, and are adopted by the London District Telegraph Company, which is, we think, only a preliminary to the further application of these highly ingenious instruments. A social fact in connection with this Company may be mentioned here. At their meeting held a short time since, it was stated that the large number of applications for employment at ten shillings a week from respectable and well-educated young women, 'had both astonished and grieved the directors.'

Professor Wharton Jones has made an important optical discovery, which, while especially advantageous to persons of weak eyes, will be prized by all who appreciate eyesight. It is a form of spectacle glasses whereby paintings and engravings appear as stereoscopic pictures; that is, the figures and objects are seen in full relief and roundness. The glasses may be fitted and worn as ordinary spectacles, or used in an opera-glass, and with an effect as surprising as it is delightful. To frequenters of picture-galleries—to antiquaries fond of studying Gothic architecture, and the features of old ruins—the new glass will be as a double power of vision. A machine has been made for guiding the glasses, and we hear that they will shortly be on sale.

Experiments have been made at Hull which demonstrate that a steamer may be cut in two and lengthened so as to increase her burden by 100 tons, without any sacrifice of speed, and with a positive improvement in seaworthiness. At the same port, iron steamers are building for the Atlantic Royal Mail Company, which are to cross the ocean at a rate of twenty miles an hour. This rate is actually promised. If realised, it will indeed be a triumph. Another improvement beneficial to navigation is Silver's governor for marine steam-engines—a most valuable appliance in stormy weather, being immediate in its action, affording all the sudden relief required on such occasions, and saving the attendance of the engineer at the throttle valve.—Mr Atherton of Woolwich recognising the fact that iron batteries and mailed ships are not proof against the tremendous shock of the Armstrong gun, recommends that a prize should be offered for a solidifying pulp which, light, tough, and non-absorbent, might be so applied to a ship as to render sinking impossible, and thus leave, as heretofore, our naval contests to be decided by personal bravery.

Those martyrs of science, as we may call them, who formed the Franklin expedition, are still mournfully talked about: the Geographical Society have devoted one of their evening meetings to the subject; the Admiralty have published a map embodying M'Clintock's discoveries, and marking the spots where the incidents occurred of the fearful tragedy—the unsuccessful struggle for life of five-score English seamen and their officers. The successful result of the final searching voyage must be accepted as some mitigation of regret; and of this voyage the narrative will ere long be published by the well-known publisher of Albemarle Street. Spilsby, in Lincolnshire, Sir John Franklin's birthplace, talks of erecting a statue to his memory: Banbridge, in Ireland, moots the question of a similar memorial to Crozier; and Oxford proposes Franklin's life, labours, and character to her graduates, as the subject of a prize poem.

The Société d'Acclimation have been instrumental in sending a herd of camels and a dozen Arab horses from Algiers to Brazil, where it is hoped the animals will breed and prove of good service while the country waits for highways and railways.—Mr Fortune reports that the tea-plants introduced by him into the United States have not failed, and that the plantations in Upper India are thriving.—The United States government have published ten quarto volumes containing geographical and topographical reports, together with the geology and natural history of the several routes surveyed for the projected railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific in 1853–6 by officers of the War Department. The books are handsomely illustrated with coloured lithographs, figures of the fauna and flora of the country, and views of astonishing geological phenomena. The authorities at Washington, with their usual liberality in such matters, have forwarded numerous copies of the work as gifts to scientific institutions and libraries in this country and on the continent.—The means taken to procure a water-supply in regions deficient of rivers and springs are succeeding beyond expectation; in Kentucky, Indiana, and Wisconsin, as well as towards the Rocky Mountains, an abundant flow of water has been obtained by the boring of artesian wells; the lands which only wanted water enough to stimulate their fertility, are now bearing excellent crops.

Naturalists, as well as social economists, are interesting themselves in the question which arises out of the fact that the salmon does not cross the equator, or inhabit the southern hemisphere; and our cousins at the antipodes are desirous that their rivers, as yet uncontaminated by the villainous offscourings of towns and factories, should be resorted to by that favourite fish. Some attempts which have been made within the past few years to convey young salmon thither have failed; they are now to be renewed, the proprietors of some of our Scottish fisheries having consented to furnish a supply of eggs and fry in the approaching season; and as these are to be sent out with all the precautions gathered from experience, we may reasonably hope for a successful issue to the undertaking. The Royal Society of Tasmania offer L.500 for five pair of living salmon full grown; L.2 per pair for salmon smolts; and L.1 per pair for fry. Meanwhile, we learn that thirty carp and four dozen thrushes have been safely landed in South Australia, where by this time they are perhaps comfortably naturalised. Is there not something in this indicative of lingering attachment to the old country—to the far-away *home?* The song of the thrush heard around the farms, and along the edge of the bush, will recall to the exile panting under an Australian sun, a thousand delightful associations of shady lanes and the green-wood of his native land.—We may add to these particulars concerning fish, that an attempt is making on the coast of Norfolk to establish a marine observatory for the study of the instinct and habits of fish, commencing with the herring and mackerel.

In the present state of geological science, with its valuable and interesting relations to modern commercial enterprise, and the almost bewildering vistas which it opens into the past history of our globe, we note with satisfaction the promised publication of Mr Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species.* This, though but a summary of a great work not yet complete, on which the author has been engaged for years, is waited for with something like eager expectation by those who are best able to appreciate its merits; as it will discuss the scientific questions which have of late years occupied the attention of savans and philosophers in all civilised countries.

The Austrian frigate *Novara*, whose exploring voyage round the world we have from time to time noticed, having returned in safety to Trieste, with ample collections of all that men of science think worth picking up in these days, a book is to be published by the imperial government, giving an account of the voyage and its scientific results. Dr Hochstetter, naturalist to the expedition, was so much captivated with the geology of New Zealand, that he quitted the ship at that island, and devoted six months to a study and survey of the province of Auckland. The Auckland Mechanics' Institute elected the doctor an honorary member of their body, and he, in return, gave them a lecture setting forth the results of his survey, of which one of the most satisfactory facts is the existence of large formations of brown coal, valuable for home consumption and the manufacture of gas, but inferior to black coal for steamers on long voyages. Another fact, comfortable to settlers on the flanks of a smoking hill, is, that the volcanoes are dying out.

Dr Krapff's narrative of his missionary labours and researches in Africa will, it is said, be as widely read as Livingstone's interesting book. It would seem as if all African mysteries were now to be cleared up, for yet another book is to be published at Vienna by Ladislaus Magyar, a Hungarian, who has lived in Africa ever since 1849, where, having married the daughter of a chief, he had excellent opportunities for safe travel and observation, and availed himself thereof to explore certain countries south of the equator which hitherto have scarcely been known even by name.

The last annual report of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society shews how much may be accomplished for social welfare, and in useful practical results, by steadily working out an enlightened plan of action. So much success has attended the Society's endeavours in Cornwall, that they now call upon inventors in all parts of the kingdom to send their inventions to Falmouth for approval and reward at their annual meeting. They cultivate the fine arts, as well as mechanical science and natural history, and the pictures lent by sympathising friends constitute a highly pleasing feature of their exhibitions. Most noteworthy among the inventions and improvements mentioned in the report are—a new pump-valve fitted with vulcanised India-rubber instead of leather, which promises to render good service in the pumps of mines and engineering works generally; a machine for clothing copper wire for the use of electricians, which coats one pound per hour, and at half the cost of wire coated in the ordinary way; a safety-cot for babies, which can be easily worked by the foot in any part of a room by a person sitting any distance from it, and without risk of overturn; a dipping-needle, by the well-known magnetician, Mr R. W. Fox, which, being constructed of aluminum, is much lighter, and consequently more portable, than instruments made of brass; a miner's theodolite; a shifting-crutch convertible into a walking-stick; an apparatus to enable shoemakers to stand at their work; a model of a steam-engine, with a new side-valve, by a working miner, who had seen a steam-engine for the first time only two years previously; and, in the fine arts, a copy of an oil-painting by a sawyer, 'who,' as the report says, 'shews how the leisure hours of a working-man may be turned to account.'

Our notice may be very properly concluded by a passage from the report, inasmuch as it expresses the pleasure felt by the committee that 'prizes have been awarded in cases where the recipient has had no other means (than through the society) of making his inventions known, and might otherwise have long remained in obscurity; in other instances, they have recompensed ingenious men, who have suffered from continuous disappointment and neglect; in others, they have conferred assistance on struggling artisans with such slender means of support, that a prize even of a few shillings has been a stimulant and encouragement to them.'

It is refreshing to read of endeavours after self-improvement by working-men in a remote part of the realm, while hundreds in London, which claims to be the most enlightened of cities, enact laws to forbid self-improvement, and actually throw themselves into idleness and penury, at word of command. Who would believe that Englishmen could be so misguided? What they suffer may be inferred from a significant statement in one of the registrar-general's weekly reports for October, namely: 'Of bricklayers, 1 died in the week; of bricklayers' children, 8: of carpenters, 3 died in the week; of carpenters' wives, 2; of carpenters' children, 14: of masons, 1 died in the week; of masons' wives, 1; of masons' children, 2: of painters, 2 died in the week; of painters' wives, 2; of painters' children, 9: of plasterers' children, 3 died.'

The large increase in the number of deaths from small-pox has originated a serious question: Is that deadly malady regaining some portion of its former destructiveness? The Medical Society of Geneva offers a prize of 500 francs each to the authors of the best two essays on that question, discussing the disease in its various forms, and the question of whether revaccination is completely and definitively a preservative from small-pox.

A CRICKET-MATCH IN CANTON.

Preceded by Whang, whose long black tail and dark dress gave him the appearance of a huge tadpole, we set out one evening after sunset to visit one of the most fashionable of the thousand-and-one gaming-houses with which Canton is infested. After about fifteen minutes' smart walking, we arrived at a low narrow door in a dark narrow street, into which we stooped and squeezed ourselves, and, keeping close to our conductor's 'tail,' entered a small room lit by three lanterns as large as regimental double-drums, and of the same shape, and seven or eight oblate spheroids, which were dangled about in the hands of the gamesters' attendants, and by some of the sporting-gentlemen themselves, so anxious were they about the game. '*Tseng tow ke!*' cried our conductor, which, being interpreted, means, 'Clear the way!' But we checked his rudeness, and declared we only came as visitors, and did not intend to bet.

In the centre of the room was a round table, ornamented at the edges with a richly carved ivory rim; in the centre of this table was a large porcelain bowl, of a delicate white colour, veined and clouded with very pale tints of purple; round this bowl were assembled some fifteen or twenty Chinese gentlemen, evidently in a state of intense expectation and impatience. At opposite sides of the bowl stood two Chinese attendants, who acted as *backers* of the respective combatants, each being armed with a straw. The play was now ordered to begin.

Two other attendants immediately made their way through the crowd, each with a little carved ivory case having a gold top of open work like an aromatic scent-box. Out of the cases were produced two large crickets. These fighting insects are regularly trained for the contest by a variety of curious processes. They are of a dusky colour, with strong legs and thighs, thick bodies, and broad bull-heads, and have mouths that bite like the front claw of a little crab. The combatants were placed at the same time on the inside surface of the bowl, and, sliding down quickly, came against each other, head foremost, with a dry, crisp, cracking sound. But they immediately drew back, and began to manœuvre in the air with their front legs. At sight of this, great applause was elicited from the company.

The gamesters, however, soon became too impatient to bear with this display of 'science,' and the backers were ordered to make them 'go to work.' These gentry, accordingly, advanced their straws, and stirred, and turned, and poked the crickets, till the poor creatures became so exasperated at what they evidently thought to be the strong provocation given by each other, that they reared themselves on their hind legs, and danced, and bit, and wrestled with their front legs, and pulled, and scratched, and tore, and rolled over and over, and jumped up and down, and slid about, and bled and foamed at the mouth, until pieces of skin and joints of legs were strewn quivering over the bottom of the bowl.

The Chinese gentlemen were all excited to the highest degree; they also capered, and slid, and jumped up and down, and pulled and scratched, and squeaked and screamed, and frothed at the mouth, while their eyes were all like glittering beads. They betted for *fly-cakes*—cakes in which small black flies are baked by way of currants; but the thing hazarded is only nominal, gambling for money being contrary to the law. These nice cakes, however, are privately understood to represent money.

I confess I was at last so absurd as to become excited myself as the fight went on, and made several bets of ten cakes, with the understanding that my cakes meant dollars. My friend, Captain Bowling, in order to prevent me being 'done,' hedged all my bets. I felt certain as to which of the crickets would win, for one of them had by this time no atom of wing left, and scarcely half a leg to stand upon, while the other had one ragged wing quite entire at the shoulder, and three good stumps of thighs.

My bets had by this time amounted to one hundred dollars, Captain Bowling having carefully 'hedged' to the same amount with different sporting-gentlemen in the room. No sooner, however, had I made my bet of the last ten cakes, than the cricket which was reduced to a mere trunk, and which, of course, I had betted against, bit the head of his adversary completely off! There lay the vanquished cricket, and there lay its head, with the mouth opening and shutting. I have not the slightest idea how it was done. It all seemed fair enough, and, I may add, with shame in my participation in it, barbarous enough—as bad as our cock-fighting. But *how* did it happen that my cricket lost? Surely some blackleg longtail must have done the deed with an invisible pair of nippers.

Howbeit, I paid the hundred dollars. Captain Bowling then went laughing round the room to collect his bets, which would just have got the money back again: when suddenly a servant rushed in, as pale as ashes and cried out that three mandarins and a troop of soldiers were about to surround the house. Down came the large lanterns from the ceiling—out went those in the hand—smash went the porcelain basin—and amid the scrambling rush of the crowd, and the crashing sound of china under foot, I was pushed about i the dark, first one way, then another, till eventually I fought my way out into the street by some othe door than the one by which I had entered, and fe over the prostrate body of Captain Bowling, who w lying with his head in a broken lantern, but not hur with the exception of a few pretty severe bruises.

LYING ILL.

Love! kiss me, kiss me on the lips,
  And kiss me on the cheek;
  And I would that I could speak,
My heart, my heart so happy pants;
  But I feel lost and weak.

This cup of pain so bitter is,
  And I feel dull with woe,
  And my tears are falling slow;
But I touch your neck, your rosy neck:
  So I am blest, I know.

O Love, we wedded years agone!
  A blessed bliss for me.
  Love! let me, let me see
Your blest, soft eyes burn into mine:
  Dear eyes, how kind they be!

I touch your neck; my tears flow down:
  They soothe me while I speak;
  O Love, I feel so weak!
But, kiss me, kiss me on the lips,
  And kiss me on the cheek.

T. A.

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OUR CHALYBEATE WELL.

As there is a probability, or, as some say, even a certainty, that Buttercombe Parva will almost immediately take rank among the great Watering-places of England, it is as well that some account should be given of that fount of its greatness, its Miraculous Well, before the thousand footsteps of Fashion shall have trodden out the traces of old romance about its brink; which happened, as we all know, to the baths of Prince Bladud, whose memory was quite forgotten, until rescued by Mr Pickwick, in the more modern splendours of the court of King Nash. We hasten to write of Buttercombe Parva, then, as it still is—holding ourselves irresponsible for any change of cloud-topped pinnacle or gorgeous dome it may undergo while these few pages are passing through the press—with its Pump, but without its Pump-*room;* with its village Inn, but without its Royal Victoria Hotel for All Nations; with its shops for the sale of miscellaneous articles, but without its *Emporia;* with the donkeys luxuriating on its common land, but without those scarlet trappings and Liliputian panniers which proclaim their dedication to visitors; with the fine open space in its centre, adapted, indeed, for the erection of anything, but without that equestrian statue of Farmer Kennun (in brass) who discovered Buttercombe Well.

Early, however, as we had taken the field—we don't mean the field where the well is, for that is not to be had under a guinea the cubic foot—we found it a task by no means easy to find out for certain who *did* first discover it. Many benefactors of their species have had a delicacy about declaring themselves to a grateful public—we don't know who wrote the old Scotch ballads, and no man can lay his hand upon the original inventor of sherry-cobbler—and it may be that Farmer Kennun's modesty, which has blushed hitherto unseen through a protracted existence, may have waited for this opportunity to exhibit itself; but certain it is he never confessed to having found out the virtues of this wonderful well in the first instance. On the contrary, we have heard him, with much admiration, assign this honour, on several different occasions, to as many different individuals.

Dame Durden, for instance, had discovered it years ago, and had got entirely cured of her paralysis by its miraculous qualities; only, with the selfishness peculiar to extreme old age, she had kept the secret to herself, and only revealed it upon what she had every reason to believe was her death-bed.

Gaffer Grey, too, who had been lame for a score of years, had happened, on one occasion, to tumble into the well—a circumstance which, to those who were acquainted with that venerable rustic, did not enhance the immediate value of the water as an article of consumption—and had walked straight ever afterwards to the end of his life.

But, upon inquiry being strictly made, all that was corroborated concerning Dame Durden was, that she had used the well, because it happened to be handy, for culinary purposes; had drunk its water when she could get nothing better to drink; and on some few occasions had washed herself in it—but this last allegation was doubted by those who knew her best. She had had a stiffness of the arm, which sometimes was better, and sometimes was worse; and it was certainly worse in winter, when she didn't much use the water, than in summer, when she did. With regard to the well being of a chalybeate character, Dame Durden observed, that 'she had never heard nothink of that; no, nothink *agen the well* at all, from nobody.'

The case of Mr Grey would hold even still less water (and of water of a miraculous character, absolutely none at all). It was true that he had not been seen to walk straight for a period of twenty years; but that was not so much through constitutional lameness as through constitutional attachment to drink. It was true that he had strayed, upon one occasion, into the field which contained this treasure of a well, and had managed to tumble into it; but it was no less a fact that he had been taken out thoroughly sobered, to his bed, whereon he died, in a fortnight afterwards, of the rheumatics.

All those to whom Farmer Kennun had attributed the first discovery of the virtues of Our Chalybeate Well being eliminated by similar investigation, we could not but come to the conclusion that the honour was due, after all, to Farmer Kennun himself, to whom, by a singular coincidence, the field in question also happened to belong.

This fact becoming at last incontrovertibly established, that gentleman accepted his position, and is now the recognised founder of Buttercombe Spa. It was vouchsafed to him, and to him alone, to hear 'strange explosions,' when at a short distance from our (and his) miraculous well; the which, in his intelligent perception of chemical phenomena, he attributes to 'the escape of the gas.' Certain it is, indeed, that the gas, or whatever else is the peculiar property of Our Well, has a curious predilection for escaping from it and then returning to it again, quite unexpectedly, and sometimes in a wholly different form. Of three bottles full of it, selected at short intervals, and carried off with our own hands for analytical investigation, No. 1 was found to contain as good and tasteless water as a Christian needs to drink; No. 2 had iodine in it; and No. 3 was very strongly impregnated with Epsom salts. Now, these very striking natural characteristics—however singular and interesting they may be, and are, in a scientific point of view—appear to us to militate strongly against the value of Our Well as a medicinal agent. There is no knowing what changes may be in preparation in that wonderful spring, nor what are the laws which govern their periodical occurrences. Some noble lord who visits Buttercombe Parva Spa for gout, may, for all we can tell, get a draught of cod-liver oil some morning; or his lady, with a pulmonary complaint, may, on the other hand, toss off a glass of colchicum. We should scarcely be surprised if a quantity of some patent medicine even should be thrown up during one of these throes of nature, to which, like the Icelandic geysers, Our Well appears to be subject, and to find its Protean surface covered with floating boxes of Holloway's Pills.

Our Chalybeate Well has, we believe it is confessed on all hands, no iron in it whatever—but that, of course, only increases its singularity. What its advocates mainly rely upon (and we must allow that there is now no little truth in their assertion) is, that the water that comes out of it 'has a very nasty taste.' This, and the fact that the rector of the parish has been heard to say that it 'did him good,' are the foundations upon which the fame of Buttercombe Parva is about to be built. Small beginnings, indeed; but how interesting will it be in time to come to be able to trace the origin of our gigantic and palatial city down to them! We dare say Cheltenham herself had nothing better to boast of at one time; it is possible that the savage tribes who formerly inhabited Bath may have considered its bubbling springs very filthy drinking; the Abbot of Leamington may have once inadvertently remarked that its water—mixed perhaps in a little sack—had 'done him good.' It is both strange and rare to read of the infancy of something that is fated to be great, before the greatness happens to it; biographies of that sort being almost without exception retrospective. Buttercombe Parva is, as we have already written, as yet a mere village. Farmer Kennun's field is still frequented by kine only, principally of a brown colour—doubtless in consequence of the ferruginous—— But, no; we were forgetting the peculiar idiosyncrasy of Our Chalybeate Well. The whole space, consisting of several acres, is divided, however—upon a very accurate red and blue 'plan' at least—into spacious public edifices. The News-room, where the people of fashion will retire after bathing, and where coffee will be procurable, is to be on the left-hand side of the gate as you enter, where the dung-heap now stands. The Assembly Hall, comprehending a Pump-room, Hot and Cold Bath-rooms, and a Ball-room with a small adjoining Apartment expressly adapted for whist-players, is of course to surround the miraculous spring. An ecclesiastical establishment—it has been expressly stipulated by the rector—is to be erected opposite to the News-room; and Farmer Kennun (quite unknown to the rector) is said to have already fixed his eye upon a fashionable preacher of Evangelical principles and tried Watering-place attractions. The capabilities of Buttercombe Parva in the way of accommodation are at present rather confined—when we have mentioned the bay-window over the butcher's shop, and the second room in the turnpike toll-house, indeed, we come to the end of them—but, in design, they are absolutely without limit. Kennun Crescent, consisting of two hundred and forty mansions (the three centre ones with pilasters, and considerably larger than the rest), is to have a western aspect, towards Buttercombe Regis. Kennun Terrace, with its back to this palatial pile, and intended less for title persons than for the richer sort of landed gentry will command an uninterrupted view (save for few isolated houses to be called Kennun Villas) o the parish workhouse. The principal street, wit its magnificent commercial establishments, will, it i rumoured, in return for his valuable corroboration o the virtues of Our Chalybeate Well, be named after ou rector. Durden Square will immortalise, as far a bricks and mortar and the best Portland stone can d it, the memory of her whose deep obligation to it waters has been already described; and similarly Gaffer Grey Parade is the area fixed upon for the tw brass bands—one native, and the other German—t play on alternate afternoons to the distinguished visitors. 'There,' says the prospectus, at present in M Kennun's desk, receiving its finishing-touches from his imaginative pen, but shortly to be circulated in print through the length and breadth (as he has been heard to say himself) of the New and the Old Worlds —'There will the soothing strains of the latest music charm away what lingering remnants of disease the healing waters of Our Chalybeate Well may have failed to eliminate. There will Rheumatism forget its pangs, and Consumption omit its but too customary cough. Age—titled Age—will there renew its youth in the contemplation of the young and the lovely; and the domestic affections be evoked by the spectacle of perambulators full of the most high-born children.'

We decline, from motives of delicacy, as well as on account of the laws relating to copyright, to quote further; and merely remark, that the whole document is conceived in the same lofty style of glowing eloquence. We believe, although we have no authority to make the offer, that if any needy nobleman in want of a couple of thousand pounds, would come down at once to Our Chalybeate Well and be cured of any physical malady, that the money would not be wanting to refit him in other respects. The quarter of that sum might be paid perhaps even for a *bona-fide* admission—to be publicly made use of—that it did his Lordship good. But he had better make haste about it, for 'the Season' of Buttercombe Parva Spa is positively to commence next spring.

In the meantime, a beginning—humble enough, it is true, but still a beginning—has been made. A subscription list for building purposes is at this moment going the round of the parish, headed with quite a munificent sum by Farmer Kennun. There are certain miserable detractors who hint that such generosity is not altogether unreasonable, since the commencement will be made upon his land. A diminutive pony is also already conveying over the district, in a peculiarly shaped cart, the water from Our Chalybeate Well *for sale*. The rector buys two gallons *per diem* of it; as Mr Kennun asserts, for his private drinking, but as the aforesaid detractors contend, for manuring his asparagus bed.

Thus far, then, things have progressed at present towards making Buttercombe Parva famous, and i glorification of Our Chalybeate Well. But as impartia chroniclers, we feel it right, before concluding ou narration, to give Mrs Deborah Giles's account of th matter, who has lived in the parish rather over eighty years, and is therefore entitled to be heard upon al local topics.

She is a little hard of hearing—hard of convictio and even 'obstinate as a mule,' says Farmer Kennu —and perhaps inclined to cling to ancient legen rather than to modern chemical discoveries; but sh has her senses about her nevertheless, and when sh entertains an opinion, has no sort of hesitation i delivering it. The following are Mrs Deborah Giles' very own words.

'Killibit Well,' says she, 'd'wont tell I nothi about your Killibit Wells, for it's all a pack o nonsense. A nasty taste has it? Ah! it's loikely to be nasty; d'wont *I* know? Tinker's jackass was a coming whoam, years ago, with a load of salt, and dropped down dead there; that eh did; and they buried him, salt and all, in Kennun's Well. Nasty! Why, o'course it's nasty; well it may be. Jackass and salt be at the bottom o' it. That's why.'

And that, according to its oldest inhabitant, is how we make Chalybeate Wells at Buttercombe Parva.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

It is always a pity when people don't call things by their right names. There is no more fruitful source of confusion and failure; and we suspect that the misnomer of styling a certain class of mutual assurance companies 'friendly societies,' has had not a little to do with the precarious and consumptive existence of a great many of those useful institutions. It has given rise to a great deal of ambiguity and misapprehension as to their real objects and mode of working, and has prevented their affairs being administered with that close adherence to scientific principles which can alone preserve them in a sound and flourishing condition. So far as the great majority of these societies are concerned, there is, strictly speaking, nothing 'friendly' about them at all, except a very proper and natural friendliness for the cherished individual vulgarly known as 'Number One,' and a strong desire to promote the welfare of himself and family. The society, as a body, stands to the individual members simply in the relation of a tradesman to his customers. The tradesman sells beef, or bread, or beer; the society sells a provision for casualties affecting its members. In either case, the customer pays for what he wants, and there is, properly speaking, nothing more friendly or benevolent in the one case than in the other. The man who joins a 'friendly society' engages in a simple business transaction; he makes a stipulated periodical payment to the society, and the society, in return, undertakes to give him a certain weekly allowance, should he fall sick and be unable to do his work, and to pay down a certain sum to his family when he dies. Joe Muggins, when he begins paying his 2s. a month, or whatever it may be, does not know how many days he will be ill out of the years he has got to live, or how many those years will be. He knows there will be a certain aggregate amount of sickness and death over the society as a whole, but he cannot tell how it may be distributed; some members will have more, others less, than their average proportion. By joining the society, they throw their luck into a mass, and then redistribute it so as to do away, to some extent, with the disproportion which previously existed. Muggins just throws his luck in with the rest. If it turn out bad, if he get an ugly fall, or catch a fever, or find that hacking cough prove too much for him, then the others help him to bear the distress which might otherwise have overwhelmed him. If it turn out good, then he takes his part in doing the same kind office for others.

Of course, if he has been blessed with particularly good health, there will be no return for his money during his lifetime, except that ease of mind and freedom from anxiety which he derives from the knowledge that he has provided against hard times, should they befall him, and which may have had not a little to do with the strength and activity he has enjoyed. This release from care, partial as it is, is worth the money. The vigour and longevity of annuitants are proverbial. With the enjoyment of the fruits of their investment they often seem to enter on a new lease of life; and we find, indeed, that the members of these mutual assurance societies do actually enjoy a higher life-rate not only than the population as a whole, but even than the middle and upper classes of society.[*] But our friend Muggins, and the others, who happen to have been in luck, and to have escaped accidents and sickness more than some of their neighbours, have no right to consider themselves peculiarly charitable and benevolent characters, because their unfortunate brother-members profit by their contributions, while they themselves, being in no want, get nothing. The sick man claims his allowance not as a charity, but as a right. He only gets what he has paid for, and there is no obligation on one side or the other: hence the bargain should be based as rigidly and unswervingly upon the principles of profit and loss as any other business transaction, allowance of course being made for the fact, that the society has no profit to make beyond what is required to meet its expenses. All this seems plain enough, and hardly worth while explaining; yet what with the crude notions of the men who have the working of many of these institutions, and the mummery and sentiment with which many of them are associated, their real and legitimate character has been too frequently lost sight of, and ruin has been the result.

Mutual assurance societies appear to be of very ancient origin. The old Greeks were in the habit of contributing to a common chest for the relief of those who experienced adverse fortune; the Romans had a sort of burial-club, which allowed about L.3 for funeral expenses, in consideration of 15s. and a jar of wine on entrance, and a monthly subscription of 2d.; and the old guilds of the Anglo-Saxons partook very much of the character of what are now known as friendly societies. A proof, however, that until of late years they were not based on sound principles, is to be found in the fact, that none of those now in existence can be traced very far back. Daniel Defoe, in his *Essay on Projects*, recommended, as quite a novelty, the formation of societies 'by mutual assurance, for the relief of members in seasons of distress;' and a number were in operation some ten or twelve years later. In 1793, they received the sanction of parliament; but although some societies claim to have been born about the beginning of the 18th century, they have no proof to shew of it; and the probability is, that most of those now surviving are of much later date. In 1802, only 9672 members were returned as belonging to such societies; in 1815, they were enumerated at 925,429; while at present, the number of societies enrolled and certified in England and Wales is stated at 20,000, with funds exceeding L.9,000,000. The whole number of members connected with societies enrolled and unenrolled has been calculated at about 3,052,000, with an accumulated capital of L.11,360,000, and an annual revenue of L.4,980,000![†] More than 10 per cent. of the societies, according to Mr Tidd Pratt, the English registrar, have safely passed the maximum point—thirty-two years—and are now firmly established; but the same authority also reveals the distressing fact, that from the passing of the first act in 1793 to the end of 1858, out of 28,550 societies enrolled and certified, no fewer than 6850 have perished, notice of dissolution from 58 societies having been received during 1858 alone. Nor is this the worst, for it is beyond a doubt that a considerable number of societies still going on, and no doubt enrolling new members, or fresh victims, as they may be more appropriately termed, are rotten to the core, and sure to go down with a crash some fine morning before long. Out of 4000 societies whose affairs were examined by Mr Ansell the actuary, *not one* was in a perfectly sound financial position!

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[*] This is no doubt partly because their connection with such an institution necessitates, as Mr Neison remarks, 'a certain amount of frugality and industrial habit, sufficient to separate them from those reckless and improvident persons who are more openly exposed to the vicissitudes of poverty, distress, destitution, and disease, incidental to fluctuations in the demand for labour;' but it is due also, in no small measure, to the ease of mind which they secure, and which is one of the best preservatives against sickness. At anyrate, the fact is worth noting.

[†] Lord Beaumont's Speech in the House of Lords, 1850.

Now, when we think of the thousands and thousands of decent industrious working-people who have placed their hardly earned savings in these institutions, and rely on them to keep them off the parish in sickness and old age, this state of things is alarming enough. The failure of one of these societies involves a greater amount of misery and distress than the failure even of a great bank, where ever so many hundred times as much money is concerned; for in the one case the persons affected are mostly those who don't keep all their eggs in one basket, but have another store to fall back on, should the first be lost to them, whereas in the other, the poor folk are ruined out and out; what they lose is little, but it is their all. No one with the slightest feeling of humanity could contemplate such a result without doing all he could to avert it. But apart altogether from higher motives, on the lowest ground of selfishness, the middle and upper classes are seriously interested in the fate of these societies. Mr Tidd Pratt estimates the saving to the poor-rates, from the action of the friendly societies, at no less than two millions a year. Another reliable authority, Mr Hardwick of Manchester,* has ascertained that, 'when labour is moderately plentiful, from 70 to 80 per cent. of the applications for relief in our large towns arises from sickness, death, or disability of some kind or other;' and it came out in evidence before the Parliamentary Committee of 1849, that out of 120 inmates of the Birmingham workhouse, excluding the young able-bodied labourers, 60 had belonged to clubs which had broken up. Out of 16 bedridden paupers, who had belonged to societies of one kind or another, 13 received no benefits, because the funds of their respective clubs were exhausted; while out of 29 paupers in the Alresford and Winchester Union Workhouse, 20 had belonged to defunct societies. The economy of promoting these associations on a sound basis, and preserving them in health and vigour, is therefore unquestionable.

Of course, in the infancy of the mutual assurance movement, the founders of societies had neither statistics nor experience to guide them, and consequently their tables were made up after a very 'happy-go-lucky' fashion. Each society tried to gain adherents by offering the largest return for the smallest investment. The contributions were absurdly low—the allowances and annuities absurdly high; and the result was, in nearly every case, that all the funds were spent in the sick allowances, and when the superannuation claims began to come in, there was nothing in the purse to meet them, and bankruptcy became inevitable. Now, however, the government returns of sickness and mortality, and the experience of the societies themselves, afford a tolerably reliable clue to the calculations on which the subscriptions and returns should be based, and every year is adding to our stock of knowledge, and establishing more precise and accurate rules. If the aggregate of cases be only large enough, the chances of ill health and death may be calculated with an approximation to certainty quite sufficient for all practical purposes. It is now, we believe, generally accepted as a rule, that at the age of 20, the average sickness of the members of a friendly society is between 8 and 9 tenths of a week per year; at 40, about 1 week and 1-tenth; at 60, about 3 weeks and 7-tenths; and at 70, about 13 weeks. Then, as to the expectation of life, the average at 20 years may be stated at about 42½ years; and at 40, about 27½. So that the amount of money to be got out of each member, and the liability of expenditure, in the shape of sick, superannuation, and death allowances, may be reckoned pretty closely. Mr Tidd Pratt calculates that for 2s. a month, beginning at the age of 23, or 2s. 8d. at the age of 40, a weekly allowance of L.1 in sickness may be secured, to males, the monthly contribution and benefit ceasing at 60 years of age; while L.20 at death may be contracted for by monthly payments of 7d., beginning at the age of 20; 10d. at 30; and 1s. 1d. at 40. According to a table compiled by Mr Ratcliffe, from the experience of the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows, a sick allowance of 10s. a week, to be continued till 70 years of age, an annuity of L.6, 10s. after that period (contributions for both ceasing at 70 years of age), and the sum of L.10 at death, may be obtained by a monthly payment of a fraction more than 1s. 8d., beginning at the age of 20; 2s. 4d. at 30; and 3s. 5d. at 40.

The chief causes of the disease which is fast sapping the vitality of many of the friendly societies, are the insufficiency both of members and rates of contribution; the absence of graduated rates for different ages; and the costly mummeries with which many of them are bound up. Before such an institution can be safely worked, there must necessarily be a wide field of membership over which the joint-liability may extend, so that the excess of misfortune in a certain number of cases may not bear too severely on the remainder, who have to provide compensation. Then, of course, it is clear that if the concern is to be self-supporting, the rates of contribution must be strictly regulated by the average liability, and not by benevolent impulse or capricious guess-work; and it is also equally clear that it is a gross and manifest injustice to charge a man, entering at 20 years of age, the same prices as a man who does not enter till 40 or 60, and who brings with him an infinitely higher amount of liability, both as regards sickness and death. Yet a great many, if not the majority of friendly societies, charge them the same fees, irrespective of age, thus swindling the young members for the sake of the older ones, and holding out a premium to men to delay joining as long as possible. From the young man they get the benefit of all his payments over a long series of years, and only a slight liability; while the old man has only a few years to contribute in, and brings a heavy and immediate liability with him.

Another serious evil is the expensive 'mummeries'—for they deserve no other name—which form an element in various very extensive societies, such as the Foresters, Druids, and others. Whatever use they may have had at one time as baits to induce people to join, the working-men of our day are too sensible and intelligent to require such attractions, and ought not to have their money squandered on such follies. The following letter from certain Foresters, to Mr T. Pratt, forcibly illustrates their pernicious working:

'We are members of Court ——, No. —, of the Ancient Order of Foresters' Friendly Society, held at the ——, in the county of ——. Our anniversary will take place in June: the scarf, and horn, and ribbon, will cost, at a low rate, 8s.; dinner and band, 4s.; day's work, 2s. 6d.—total, 14s. 6d.; and if we do not attend the anniversary, the committee say they will inflict a fine of 2s. 6d., which is a heavy fine on us that have got families to keep.'

The meeting of societies in public-houses is another thing fraught with danger. In many cases, perhaps, they do no harm, but the last report of the registrar shews the evil of the system. In one club, where the annual contribution is 15s., some 6s. goes in drink besides; and in the Soberton Friendly Society, Southamptonshire, no less than 258 gallons of beer were consumed by 120 members during the last three years. These facts require no comment. Another objection to the meetings being held at such places is, that in small towns, or populous villages, each publican tries to get up one, and the effect is to split up what would have made one sound, healthy association, into a number of sickly ones, which soon fall to pieces. Other causes of failure are improper investment of the funds, want of a regular audit of accounts, and premature division of the funds.

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* To whom we are indebted for several of the facts mentioned in this paper, and to whose *Manual for Friendly Societies* (London, Routledge) we would refer any who wish to study the subject at length, as one of the most complete and practical works on this important question.

These are a few of the leading features of this important movement; and we trust erelong some means will be found of separating the sound from the unsound societies, so that the one may be fostered and encouraged, while the others are put a stop to at once, if irretrievably diseased, so that they may do no more harm, or re-established on correct principles, if there is any hope of cure.

MY GODMOTHER'S STORY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

My godmother was always fussy when expecting a friend. Her old-fashioned hospitality would not delegate to servants finishing-touches and minute arrangements bearing upon the pleasure or convenience of guests whom she delighted to honour; but even I, who knew her ways, had never seen her so restlessly bent upon any one's comfort as that of the Miss Moore she was expecting that fine July afternoon when she told me the story I am going to tell. I don't know that I was a particularly worldly girl; but certainly the fact of Miss Moore being a music-teacher in a Bath school seemed to me a little out of keeping with such elaborate preparations; and when she arrived, her appearance impressed me as little as her position. Very slight and faded, quiet, and rather cold, her presence, I feared, would be nothing but a weight and a chill during the remainder of my visit, and when she retired for the two hours' rest before dinner which my godmother looked upon as essential after any railway journey, long or short, I could not forbear asking her, with some degree of petulance, what in the world there could be in or about Miss Moore to create the interest she had shewn. It was then, and in reply to my questions, that she told me the following story.

When I lost my poor dear husband nearly one-and-twenty years ago, I chose for my widowed home a pretty little cottage in the neighbourhood of Eldersley. The country was beautiful, and the cottage secluded—two great recommendations to me at that time. I did not want society, and was not likely to be troubled with it there, for the large proprietors around would hardly discover whether my small abode was tenanted or not. The only one of them who called upon me was Mr Moore of Acton Hall, with his only daughter. He had known my husband in early days, and seemed anxious to pay all friendly attention to his widow. I had often heard my husband speak of Charles Moore as a warm-hearted and generous, but weak-minded fellow. I hardly know that he ever said so in so many words, but the impression I received was that he had rather liked than respected him. Tall and graceful, there was yet something strikingly irresolute about every movement. The forehead was white as ivory, but it sloped backwards, and the full hazel eye met yours but for a moment, and then glanced restlessly away. But he was pleasant, kind, and much easier to get on with at first than his daughter, who was then a girl of about twenty. I took it for granted that she must be like her mother, who had died many years before, for she was singularly unlike her father—tall and slight in figure as he was, but with a very contrasting air of decision in all she said or did. Her father seemed wrapped up in her, and I liked the tenderness of her manner to him, though it was protecting rather than filial, like the manner of an elder sister. More than once she broke in upon an unfinished sentence of his, deciding some question which he was discussing, or giving a positive opinion where he was merely suggesting and qualifying. Before they left, they made me promise that I would soon spend a long day with them at Acton; and when their carriage rolled away, I found myself thinking more about them than I had for some time thought about anything but my own sorrows.

When the appointed day for my visit came, Miss Moore drove over for me by herself. I was a little sorry, expecting to find conversation flag, and wishing for Mr Moore and his placid generalities to fill up the time; but long before we got to the end of our drive, all sense of restraint was gone. Miss Moore seemed to enjoy the excitement of driving her pretty spirited ponies, and the bright sunshine and rapid motion revived my spirits too. I liked her frank protecting manner; I liked to watch the energy that pervaded her whole frame, the firm little hand that gathered in the reins, the steadfast eye, the ring of the clear voice. Though a coward in a carriage generally, I felt safe with her. As we neared the house, I saw that part of it was unfinished. 'Yes,' said she, 'that's dear papa's present hobby—the new hall; necessitated by the last hobby—the new drawing-room. The old hall was once too large for the rest of the house, and he has since contrived to make the rest of the house too large for the hall. I'm sorry for it, for papa is not a rich man, and I often fear he is hampering himself seriously.' Rather startled by this unexpected frankness, I made no reply, and we drove on in silence till we reached the temporary entrance, where we were met by Mr Moore and a fashionable-looking young man, whom he introduced to me as Captain Cameron. I could not help remarking the change in Miss Moore's manner. Evidently Captain Cameron's visit was to her an event of no ordinary interest. When she had taken off her bonnet for luncheon, she hardly looked like the same person. It was not only the improvement in appearance, for the bonnet hid the small well-set head and rich hair, but the difference in voice and manner. All abruptness and self-possession were gone, and her colour came and went like a timid child's. His admiration was as evident as her embarrassment, but I felt the pleasure of my day was a good deal spoiled; for even when, after luncheon, the young officer rode away to Eldersley, where he was quartered, Miss Moore continued silent and absent, and left me to be entertained by her father, who took me to see the improvements he was making, and those he had made in former years.

It seemed that before his time Acton had been a rambling old house, without much pretence to architectural beauty; but he had raised the roof, thrown out a wing, and was now constructing a noble hall. It struck me as we walked through the grounds that he was making the house too stately in proportion to their extent, which was not considerable, nor had they much old timber to boast of. Evidently, a great many of the best trees had been recently cut down. The chief charm of the place was the noble river, which swept rapidly round the bank on which the house stood. The gardens and green-houses were not in first-rate order, and Mr Moore rallied his daughter a good deal about the ill success of her administration, for it seemed she had been replacing a head-gardener by some young protégé of her own. 'This naughty papa,' she said, turning to me, 'laughs at my economics, but I know that great greedy hall of his wants them all.' Mr Moore looked pained. 'The hall was essential, Margaret. We had no good billiard-room; the elevation was mean; the length of building disproportioned.' Playfully she put her little hand on his mouth. 'Yes, yes; but this is the very last of our building-schemes. I suppose it will be finished some day or other; then we'll shut up the house, go to Switzerland, and get rich.' Her father sighed as he put his arm round her waist, and turned the subject.

From this day I may, I think, date my friendship for Miss Moore. I was won by her frankness and her energy; and she took to me, as girls often will to women much older than themselves, and all the more because she knew I was lonely, and at that time poor. Her pretty ponies very frequently were kept pawing the gravel at my cottage-gate, while she ran in to insist upon carrying me off for a drive, or failing, would remain for a chat. Very frequently, too, I spent whole days at Acton, where Mr Moore had always a courteous welcome for me; indeed, both he and Margaret soon seemed to look upon me as a confidential friend, though, by the way, Mr Moore could never be called confiding. He had a singular way of always keeping back what he thought—what he meant to do. But he was sufficiently at his ease with me to be silent or to talk according to his own inclination. As for his daughter, she had few reserves from any one she loved; so I soon discovered the skeleton in this seemingly pleasant home. Mr Moore was living beyond his income, though to what extent she was unable to ascertain; but from his growing depression and reserve, she feared that he was becoming seriously involved. If she questioned, she roused an irritability of manner he had never shewn to her before, and this would be succeeded by a dejection that she dreaded far more. But Margaret had another counterbalancing anxiety, though she never named it to me. Captain Cameron was a frequent visitor; what brought him so often? Was his undisguised admiration of her society to be taken as signs of real feeling, or was he merely trifling with her? His manner perplexed me, and, it was plain to see, tortured Margaret. Sometimes he would ride over two or three times a week, and seem to worship the very ground she trod; then, again, days would pass without a call from him, and when he came at last, he would seem cold and constrained. As for her, it was piteous to see her on those days of vain watching and waiting. But she would struggle bravely, and I was careful not to betray that I observed her changing colour, or the icy coldness of her poor little trembling hands. Her father never failed to welcome Captain Cameron warmly, and to brighten up during his visits, whatever his previous mood. It was evident that *his* consent would be most readily given. But would it be asked? I kept considering and wondering about this, thinking sometimes that it inevitably would, and then, again, doubting whether the young officer might not intend merely to secure a pleasant year or two, and then, when his regiment was ordered off, to intrench himself behind those playful professions of extreme poverty which he was so fond of making.

Meanwhile, the new hall got finished, and Mr Moore, probably, as we said to each other, from having no longer the excitement of watching its progress, grew more and more absent and gloomy. Margaret used to talk now very constantly about him and his affairs. Several small things occurred about this time to increase her alarm. The family lawyer, a formal, impenetrable sort of man, for whom she had one of her vehement antipathies, was constantly driving over to Acton, and spending hours with Mr Moore, invariably leaving him more dejected than he found him. On one of these dark days, it so happened that the poor girl, whose allowance, it seemed, had not been regularly paid her for a year or two, was induced, by a pressing letter from her milliner, to enter her father's study, and ask for money to pay the enclosed bill. It was but a small one, but it threw Mr Moore into a state of distressing excitement. 'Girl, do you want to ruin me?' he had said. 'Curses on women and their vanity! why must you run up such bills as this just now?' And then, as she stood there petrified, for it seemed to her as though her father's mind were shaken, he looked at the trifling sum-total, seemed shocked at his own violence, tried to laugh it off, kissed her, told her the milliner should be paid the next day, and sent her back to me in tears. But that very evening Captain Cameron came over; and when Margaret returned from a stroll with him by the river's side, her eyes were bright and her step firm, as though the scene of the morning had never been. Some word or look of his had blown that cloud quite away! But it will be easily imagined that when, on the following morning, Mr Moore announced to us he was going to town for a week, I for one could not help feeling a sensation of relief. He, too, seemed more cheerful than usual, and kindly insisted that I should remain and keep his Maggie company. This was in the month of July, as I remember well, for the very day before Mr Moore's expected return, I was summoned to the death-bed of my husband's father, and did not get home till September.

The first morning after my arrival, I heard the rapid trot of the pretty ponies, and Margaret, running in, flung her arms round me in her warm-hearted way. 'You must come back with me, dear Mrs Malcolm; you must indeed. Papa wishes it; he must not be crossed.' And then, suddenly bursting into an agony of tears: 'I do not know what is the matter with papa; I fear—I fear,' lowering her voice to a whisper I guessed rather than heard, 'I think sometimes that papa is going mad.'

Of course I could not refuse to accompany her to Acton, and when I got there, we found Mr Moore so hospitable and seemingly cheerful, that Margaret's fears appeared to me quite unreasonable, though I was shocked at the look of illness on her father's face, and could not refrain from telling her that it was for his bodily health I should be inclined to tremble.

'Yes,' she said, 'he does look very ill. I think it is this new habit of his, this early bathing in the river.'

'Bathing! so late in the year?' For it was the second week in September, and the weather had a touch of frost about it. Margaret went on:

'Very soon after papa's return from town, he began to talk of bathing, as having been recommended to him by a London doctor. I wanted to go to the sea, but that he would not hear of. For the last month, he has bathed in the river every morning. He is a first-rate swimmer, and thought it would do him good to battle with the current, which, you know, is very rapid just below the house. But I do not think it agrees with him. When he returns, his manner is strange and restless, and in the evenings, when wishing me good-night, he kisses me in such a wild way, and looks into my face so wistfully. Last night, as he held me long in his arms, I felt large tears drop on my hair, and heard him say: "She at least shall be happy. Come what may, she shall be happy." I wanted to speak, and tell him I knew there was some great trouble hanging over us, but that if he would only trust me, both might be happier, and that we would bear it bravely together. But I was so frightened, I could not say one word. Hush! he is coming; let us look cheerful.'

'Mrs Malcolm, I challenge you to a stroll before dinner,' said Mr Moore. 'And my Maggie, too; I can't spare her this afternoon.'

We put on our bonnets, and went at once. His manner to his daughter was unspeakably tender, but it impressed me painfully; I scarcely knew why. It was strange and solemn, and sometimes, I thought, incoherent. I began to understand her fears. Coming home, the sunset fell yellow and cold upon the deep, swift river, and recalled to my mind his practice of early bathing.

'To-morrow morning will be decidedly frosty, Mr Moore,' said I; 'surely you will not be so imprudent as to bathe before the sun gets a little power. At six o'clock, it can hardly be light'——

'Six o'clock! Why, Biddy told me to-day that papa left his room a little after five, when it was quite dark, before any one but herself was up,' interrupted Margaret.

'Confound Biddy!' burst out Mr Moore; 'prying old fool! What does she do up at that hour? I will not have her set the house on fire, going about with her candle; pretending to brush, forsooth. It's your fault, Margaret; you've spoiled that old Irishwoman, till she has become insufferable. Tell her, once for all, that I will *not* have her get up before the others. I will not have it—I will not.'

'But, Mr Moore,' I persisted, anxious to divert him from the subject, Biddy being an especial favourite of mine, and not a little alarmed at such disproportionate vehemence about so mere a trifle—'but *ought* you to bathe? Is it good for you?'

'Perhaps not,' said he; 'perhaps I am carrying it a little too far. I had a touch of cramp this very morning. A mere touch, my Maggie; you need not look scared. The girl loves her poor father; would mourn for him, after all, I do believe.' And he looked at her with a strange yearning expression of love and woe, which seemed to frighten her, though she tried to laugh it off, saying she could not love a naughty papa who did not take care of his health, but bathed at unheard-of hours, and scolded good faithful Biddy. He tried to laugh too, but it was a sorrowful laugh.

The remainder of our walk was silent. Clouds gathered, yellow leaves fluttered thickly over our heads, and each knew that the other was sad. Margaret played the whole evening through, as, indeed, she often did. Her father held a book up before his face; but he did not turn the pages, and once, when I happened to change my seat, I caught that same loving, despairing look fixed upon his daughter, as she sat there at the instrument, her little hands sometimes flying over the keys, but oftener lingering over some sweet, sad strain with a passionate pathos I never heard equalled. I remarked that she kept playing Scotch airs, Captain Cameron's favourite ones, as if she cared for no others. Once her father asked her for one of Beethoven's adagios, of which he was very fond. She said she would look for it immediately; but she went on as if spell-bound, improvising wild, wailing variations, and then returning to dwell again on the simple melodies so dearly associated, till bedtime came.

'My Maggie,' said Mr Moore, 'my own child, you do not care for your poor father, and will not play one tune for him!'

'O papa, how thoughtless I have been. Let me play it now.'

'No, darling, it is too late. No; it is best as it is—best as it is. Give all the young heart to happiness, my own Maggie! God in heaven bless you, my child!' And he strained her to his heart with a convulsive energy which seemed to shock her, and confirmed my worst suspicions.

That night, as I sat up rather late in my own room, there came a low tap at my door, and Biddy the Irish housemaid entered to my surprise with an air of profoundest mystery.

'I ask your pardon, ma'am; and is the young mistress goin' to be wid ye agin this night?'

'No, Biddy. Miss Moore seemed tired, and wished me good-night at the door of her own room.'

'Sure, thin, ma'am, I'll be after spakin' a word wid yourself this same blessed night; for may I never sin, but there's sorrow and heartbreak to the fore, and a pity it is for the sweet young mistress, the cratur, and she so young and illigant, glory be to God.'

'What is the matter, Biddy?' said I, not without a vague dread, the faithful Irishwoman was so weird-looking with her brown 'ribbed sea-sand' face, and her keen, wistful eyes set close together like those of a monkey.

'Faix, thin, ma'am, and it's myself does not know, barrin' that the master—and he as civil a gintleman as ever was—is gone clean out of his wits altogether!' And Biddy raised her hands above her head, swaying herself to and fro in her agitation.

'Why do you think so? What has happened? What do you mean?' I inquired.

'Sure, ma'am, and it's easy to see it by lookin' on his face, let alone his ways. They've been talking long enough in the hall, but I niver let on that I tuk any notice to any soul alive but yourself. Sure and he's taken all the plate out of James's keepin', till the poor boy has not a spone to spare, and daren't ask for another for his life; and jist this evening, when I was fixin' his dressing-room, and movin' some lump of a big parcel that he brought with him from London, if he didn't come in and rate at me till I was like to drop with the fear; he that used to be the dacentest gintleman, says he'd have none of my pryin' ways; and what had I to do to be lookin' into that parcel; and no servant of his should leave their rooms till six o'clock, or he'd turn them off at an hour's notice; and that it was after settin' the house on fire I would be. Sure and he shook like an aspin, the cratur; and he's wasted, wasted, till he's no bigger than a good-sized turf. And what's to become of the swate young mistress with the trouble? O wurra, wurra!' And the warm-hearted creature threw her apron over her face and sobbed again. I comforted her as well as I could, but thought anxiously over her and my own impressions, and did not fall asleep till a late hour.

The next morning was bright and beautiful; but the pools in the gravel-walk shewed that there had been heavy rain in the night. Now the sun was shining gaily, and the robin's brave little song came in with the perfume of the clematis as I opened the window. How foolish seemed Biddy's croakings and my own apprehensions of the night before!

When I went down, Margaret was sitting at the breakfast-table alone.

'Papa is later than usual this morning,' she said. 'I fancy he has lain down for a little nap after his early dip. We will begin breakfast; he does not like to have his movements noticed.'

Accordingly we began; and then the post-bag was brought in. It so happened that both Margaret and I had two or three letters that morning; and they occupied our attention long, so that when the French clock on the mantel-piece struck ten, we were startled to find how the time had passed.

Margaret sprang up. 'I must go and look after papa.'

A few minutes more, and then she returned pale as death.

'He is not in his room. I never knew him so late for breakfast before.'

'The morning is so fine, he has been tempted to take a long walk,' said I; but my own heart was beating fast.

'I shall go and meet him,' she said.

'Dear girl, you are hardly able to stand. And then, in what direction has Mr Moore gone? May he not have had an early cup of tea, and have taken a ride to Eldersley?'

She rang the bell. 'James, did you see my father this morning?'

The man looked anxious. 'No, ma'am; my master has gone out of late before any of us were up. I generally hear the hall-door shut when he comes back; I did not hear it this morning.'

While he was speaking, I caught sight of Biddy's face at the door—a very banshee of doom and horror, and understood from her rapid glance and gesture that she wished to speak to me alone.

'Margaret, my love,' I said, 'we will go together and meet Mr Moore. Nay, dear, not so—your shawl, your bonnet; he would be annoyed if he met us thus.' And I led her to her room.

Biddy was waiting for me in mine. 'It's all over,' she said; 'the master is drownded. Sure and I said there was heartbreak at hand. There's all his clothes in a heap on the river-bank. One of the boys on the farm came along that way and saw thim, and tould the gardener, and myself met him like a madman running to see!'

'O Biddy, we must try and break it gently to Miss Moore—the shock will kill her. O perhaps, perhaps there is some mistake; I must go to her.'

Just then, Margaret came in, pale as marble, and her teeth chattering.

'I cannot wait,' she said; 'come with me at once—come.'

'Where shall we go, my darling?'

'To the river,' she gasped.

'O blessed Mother of God, she knows it then!' sobbed poor Biddy.

With one sharp cry, Margaret leaped out of my arms and fell on the floor. I hoped that she had fainted, but hers was one of those strong natures to which such transient relief is seldom allowed. In a few moments she whispered as she lay and shivered there: 'The cramp, the cramp!' I was thankful for those words; for remembering Mr Moore's manner of the night before, a darker fear had crossed my own mind. A few minutes more and the poor girl had staggered to her feet.

'Where is he? I must see him.'

I told her all I knew. She insisted upon going to the river. How we reached it, I never knew. I said it had rained hard in the night, and the river that morning was very full—oh, very full, very black, very rapid! Once seized with cramp, the slight delicate man would be rolled along with the current, swept round that curve, borne within the reach of the tide, a few miles lower down, and carried out to sea. There were many now gathering round; they were pushing off a boat; they were talking of dragging the river. Margaret wanted to remain there, but I had her carried home. She could not stand, and her eyes were closed, but she was conscious; I knew that by her moaning.

The body was not found; with the river so swollen, it was hardly likely to be so. But day after day there was the search, the shuddering hope that it might not be in vain, or rather the terror either way. Captain Cameron rode over daily to inquire for Margaret. For more than a week, I never left her room, never, therefore, saw him; but when I did so, the agony of anxiety with which he wrung my hand while asking for her, gave me a firmer conviction of the reality of his attachment than all his previous assiduities had done. When ten days were passed and gone, the lawyer came over, a few distant relatives came to the meeting, and the will was read. The estate was found to be mortgaged to its full value. The plate had almost all disappeared. There was a small sum in the bank, just enough to pay the servants their wages. All tradesmen, it would appear, had had their accounts settled soon after Mr Moore's return from London. During that last visit there, he had, it appeared, effected a policy of life assurance by which, at his death, L.20,000 was secured to his daughter. Of her mother's fortune, which had been large, only two or three hundred remained. It was decided that the property should be sold as soon as possible. Margaret had several invitations to other and gayer friends, but she preferred coming to my little cottage. She asked me whether she might live with me, and I gladly agreed to the generous arrangements she proposed, feeling sure that it would soon be superseded by one happier for herself. Biddy would have broken her heart at leaving her young mistress, so we took her into our joint-service as housemaid.

It was many weeks before Margaret rallied at all from the fearful shock. Her strong nature was strong to suffer. I sometimes thought that she tortured herself needlessly. That last night, when she had left her father's favourite air unplayed, when she had almost shrunk from the intensity of his affection, haunted her unceasingly. She seemed to feel that it would be sinful to recover from so great a sorrow; and conscious how much dearer to her than the tenderest of fathers another had become, she tried to atone for this by banishing that other from her thoughts. For three or four months, I could not prevail upon her to see Captain Cameron, though he called constantly and looked so honestly unhappy that my heart ached for him. I could not for a moment doubt that he loved Margaret; and it seemed to me so natural that any one should love her, that I never even connected this fact with that of her fortune, till I heard some common-place remark of the kind from a gossiping neighbour. But, after all, it did of course make a great difference to the young officer, who, though a man of very good family, was poor, and had expensive habits. He was a fine open-hearted handsome fellow, less intellectual than my Margaret, but winning in looks and manner, and a great favourite in his regiment. One day I made an effort, and ventured to speak of him to her; reminded her how much her poor father had liked him; how warmly he used always to welcome him, how plainly I could read from the very first what was his heart's wish for his darling child.

Margaret made no answer, but she came and sat long at my feet, hiding her face in my hands. When she raised it, her dear eyes shone in the fire-light with something of their old brightness. When next Captain Cameron called, she did not run away. He was much moved when he saw her first in her deep mourning, so pale, so thin. The tears rolled down his face, and she was the calmer of the two. From that hour, I felt comforted about her. I knew that hope and happiness would revive, slowly, perhaps—for every feeling struck deep roots into her nature—but surely, for she was young and beloved. I could not resist hinting at my cheerful anticipations to Biddy, in whose discretion I had unbounded trust. But she received the hint with an ungracious grunt, which surprised me; for though I knew her to be an inveterate spinster—having heard her over and over again give thanks and glory that she '*niver*, since she was as high as her hand, was one as cared to look after the boys'—I did think her affection for Miss Moore would have led her to rejoice in anything that promised her a return of happiness; and I told her so. 'Is it the dear young mistress's happiness,' said she, 'that Biddy Daly would be after thinking lightly of?

Troth, thin, and I 'd work my hands to the bone to bring back the smile into her eyes, and small thanks to me for that same. But, ma'am, dear, it 's over soon —over soon intirely; and I've had many a drame about it; and I 'm as good as sure it is not *that* way luck will come. And what should hinder the young mistress to live all her days as she is now, she that has the handsome fortin, and need want for nothing! Musha, thin, if I were her, I would not look at niver a one of thim.' And Biddy went on with her work with redoubled energy, as though sweeping away with the dust suitors and all such follies. However, in spite of her, the winter evenings in my little cottage began now to pass cheerily away. Margaret would again sit and play for hours—always, however, closing with that melody of Beethoven's her father had asked for that last night. She did not very often speak of him, but I knew that he was constantly present to her thoughts; and that even Captain Cameron's hold upon her affections gained additional strength from his having been so decided a favourite of poor Mr Moore's. Of course, I knew how matters would end.

Time went on. Winter passed into spring, and the lovers met almost daily; so it was no surprise to me one fine evening in May, after the two had been walking together, to see Margaret come into my room radiant but tearful; and as she threw her arms around my neck, I did not need to ask any further explanation than that she gave me by the broken words, 'My father loved him.'

SOMETHING ABOUT CLOCKS.

The desire to know the time of day seems to be as inherent in human nature as the desire to know other people's business; and could the thing be done with equal facility, there is little doubt but that that large, benevolent, and public-spirited class of individuals who take so much pleasure in regulating their neighbours' characters and affairs, would find equal pleasure in regulating their clocks and watches; displaying the same praiseworthy ingenuity in finding a screw loose in the one as in the other. Consequently, we find that in all ages and in all countries of the world, mankind has made persevering efforts to possess himself of something which should enable him to form some idea as to how 'the enemy'—as old Father Time is profanely called—is progressing.

In these days when electrical clocks in our large towns beat tick for tick with the great 'regulator' at Greenwich—which is as much as to say that their unerring fingers keep pace second by second, minute by minute, and hour by hour, with that mighty timekeeper, the earth, in its axial rotation—when every man prides himself upon his own infallible 'ticker,' and when angry husbands from 'the city,' finding dinner fifteen minutes late, settle all disputes as to time by an appeal to their watches, 'set that very day by the government time-ball in the Strand,' we can form no conception of the troubles and perplexities of our forefathers in their crude attempts to 'tell the creeping hours as they passed.'

Ages probably before the invention of the sun-dial, as we now know it, its prototype, the gnomon, had been set up on the plains of the east by those primitive astronomers, the Chaldæan shepherds, who determined, with all the precision of which that first rude astronomical instrument was capable, the length of the day and of the year, and the position of the equinoxes and the solstices.

The first machines, however, for measuring time, of which we have any distinct and certain record, were the *clepsydras*, or water-clocks. Of the precise form in which they were made, we are ignorant; but we know that they all depended upon one principle—namely, the dropping of water through an orifice of determinate size, the fall of the water indicating the time which had elapsed. They must have been extremely imperfect, inasmuch as the rate at which the water dropped would be liable to constant variation from its constantly varying height and pressure. The clepsydra was most probably a Grecian invention, and was introduced into Rome during the consulship of Pompey. In the latter place, it was used in a manner which might not unfrequently have its advantage in our own day. It would appear that the orators in their courts of justice were limited to a certain time for the delivery of their addresses, which time was indicated by the clepsydra; hence the expression of Cicero, 'latrare ad clepsydram'—a mode of literally throwing cold water upon a speaker which could not fail of being appreciated by the audience.

After the clepsydra came the hour-glass, a clumsy enough method of measuring time, which has, nevertheless, become the conventional symbol of its passing away.

Clocks, consisting of trains of wheels and weights, were probably not invented until the end of the twelfth century; they were almost invariably termed horologia. For a very long time, however, they continued very scarce, very expensive, and very imperfect, and were almost entirely confined to the monasteries and some few cathedrals. Why the monasteries should have had a monopoly of them, it is hard to say, unless, indeed, they used them in the same moralising spirit as the philosophical individual encountered by the 'melancholy Jaques' in the forest of Arden—and who is very unjustly designated a fool—who

> Drew a dial from his poke,
> And, looking on it with lacklustre eye,
> Says, very wisely: 'It is ten o'clock;
> Thus may we see,' quoth he, 'how the world wags:
> 'Tis but an hour ago since it was nine;
> And after an hour more, 't will be eleven;
> And so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe,
> And then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot;
> And thereby hangs a tale!'

That these horologia, however, were used for other and more active purposes than pointing a moral upon the flight of time, we learn from a certain book called *Primaria Instituta Canonicorum Præmonstratensium*, in which—if any of our readers are curious enough to consult it, which is hardly likely—they will find in the 909th page, and in the best monkish Latin, full directions to the sacristan to regulate the horologium, and make it strike before matins, to arouse the sleepy brothers to prayers. Strange to say, however, this horologium displayed wonderful alacrity in getting out of order, especially when the mornings were unusually cold, and the chapel unusually damp—cold and damp, it would appear, being inimical to the accurate performance of the horologium in those days. We read, however, of one enthusiastic monk, Peter Damiani by name, who had a method of measuring time peculiar to himself, for we are told that he 'had a custom of singing to himself whenever he wished to have a notion as to the quantity of time; that whenever the brightness of the sun or the position of the stars was obscured by the weather, he might form a certain time-measurer by the quantity of psalmody he had accomplished.'

Striking clocks must, we know, have been in use as early as the latter portion of the thirteenth century, for we find that Dante, who died in 1321, aged fifty-seven, makes allusion to them in his *Paradiso*. The earliest clock, of the construction of which we have positive information, was the great clock made for the palace of Charles V. in Paris, by De Vick, a German; the Germans, by the way, seeming to have taken kindly to clock-making from the earliest times. In Dover Castle there is one still in existence, bearing the date 1348, and which, therefore, in point of antiquity, takes precedence of the more celebrated clock of De Vick. According to Blackstone and Sir Edward Coke, however, a clock was constructed in England at a much earlier date—in the sixteenth year of the reign of Edward I., or about the year 1288. This clock is remarkable from having been constructed out of a fine of 800 marks, imposed by the king upon the chief-justice of the King's Bench, and was appropriately erected upon the law-courts of Westminster Hall, where for generations afterwards its strokes rung out a warning against all future malpractices. Upon its dial was written the appropriate inscription, 'Discite justitiam moniti,' which may be seen to this day by the curious upon a sun-dial now facing the same Westminster Hall.

There can be little doubt, however, that for a long time after the invention of clocks and watches—for the latter followed close upon the heels of the former—they were extremely imperfect, and of very little real value. They ought, in fact, to be regarded more as costly toys, than as really useful contrivances for measuring time. Up to the time of Shakspeare, at anyrate, they must have been very imperfect instruments indeed, for do we not find him making that 'merry mad-cap lord,' Biron, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, profanely institute a comparison between the women and the clocks of his day:

> And I, forsooth, in love? I, that have been
>   love's whip;
> A domineering pedant o'er the boy;
> What? I! I love! I sue! I seek a wife!
> *A woman, that is like a German clock,*
> Still a-repairing; ever out of frame;
> And never going aright—being a *watch*,
> But being watched that it may still go right!

We trust the ladies will be induced to pardon the above highly reprehensible sentiments, when we remind them that they were uttered by one who had passed his life in railing at love; who owns himself to have been 'a very beadle to a humorous sigh;' and who at last, by an act of retributive justice, finds himself pierced through and through—in short, 'quite vanquished'—by the soft glances of the gentle Rosaline! Could my lord, however, have lived to the present time, he would have found a wonderful reformation in clocks and watches—that the comparison now would really be a compliment, and a just one—and, excepting an occasional disposition to go too much upon tick, and to strike when they ought not, he would have found that the one could be as true and as constant as the other, and stand as little in need of regulating.

There was one thing, however, which was wanting in all clocks made up to this period, without which they could be of very little real service—namely, *the pendulum*. The origin of its invention is well known: the great Galileo, happening one day to be in a church at Pisa, was struck with the isochronous vibrations of a chandelier, suspended by a long chain from the roof, and immediately conceived the idea of employing the pendulum as a regulator for clocks. By this *isochronism* of the pendulum is meant that peculiar property or disposition which it possesses to vibrate arcs of different lengths, provided that none of them be large, in the same space of time. It is this property which gives to the pendulum its peculiar value, and is a result of the well-known law of gravitation.

Although Galileo was undoubtedly the first to perceive the isochronism of the pendulum, Huygens previously investigated its properties mathematically, and published to the world the valuable results of his investigations; and we are further inclined to believe, although there are several claimants for this honour, that he was also the first to apply the pendulum to regulate the motion of a clock-train.

The degree of accuracy with which clocks and chronometers are now made to perform is something marvellous. In Queen Elizabeth's time, a watch, which, by the way, was about the size of a dessert plate, would seldom go for more than a few hours, and that only after a fashion of its own. When, about the sixteenth century, Philip of Spain offered a reward of 100,000 crowns for a chronometer which should go sufficiently well to enable navigators to determine the longitude at sea, we find Morin, in speaking of it to Cardinal Richelieu, saying: 'I know not what such an undertaking would be even to the devil himself, but to man it would undoubtedly be the height of folly!' Now, it is by no means an uncommon thing for a chronometer to go for months without an error of more than a second, whilst the performance of our best astronomical clocks surpasses even this wonderful precision. The perfection to which chronometers are now brought makes them extremely valuable to navigators for discovering the longitude at sea—a problem the correct solution of which is absolutely essential to the safety of our sailors, the supremacy of our navy, and the stability of our commerce. Longitude is simply a difference in time between one place and another, caused by a corresponding difference of position on the earth's surface. When, therefore, the captain of a vessel departs upon a long voyage, he takes with him a chronometer, whose error and rate of variation have been tested, shewing Greenwich time. If, therefore, at any time he wishes to ascertain his longitude, or, in other words, his position east or west of the first meridian, all he has to do is to compare his chronometer, shewing Greenwich time, with the local time, and the difference between the two tells him exactly where he is. As, however, accidents may happen to the best regulated chronometers, he must have it in his power to test and correct them by a standard which is *infallible*. To do this, he consults a time-keeper of a grander character, of which the spacious firmament of heaven is the dial; those distant orbs of light, the fixed stars, the figures; and our attendant satellite, the moon, both the hour and minute hand. As with steady, unflagging pace she sweeps across that mighty dial, he is enabled, by a simple observation with his quadrant, and a reference to his nautical almanac, to ascertain his exact position, and to test the truth of his chronometer. The tables prepared for his use to enable him to do this are the result of the most painstaking and persevering investigations of the works of nature, involving the consideration and elucidation of some of the most abstruse problems of astronomy. Every 'bright particular star' stationed along the moon's path must be mapped down with the utmost precision, the exact instant, to the fraction of a second, at which they will be occulted by the moon as seen from the meridian of Greenwich, and from every degree east and west of that meridian round the earth, must be accurately calculated and noted down; and all this must be done that the mariner may know exactly the *time* it would be at that moment were he at home, and the time it is with him at the same moment wherever upon the great world of waters he may happen to be floating, that, by a comparison between the two—conjointly with his latitude, which he finds by an easier process still—he may know precisely *where he is;* no matter whether he be rounding the 'Cape of Storms,' or riding over the crested billows of the Atlantic, he may then pursue his undeviating track across the treacherous deep with the same certainty and security as though he felt beneath his feet the firm foundations of the earth itself. Let no one, then, presume to sneer at or undervalue the patient labours, the abstruse investigations of those great minds who have devoted their lives and energies to the advancement of science, and who have by their labours conferred incalculable benefits upon mankind; and let those who are disposed to emulate their example, ever remember, amid the weariness of study, the grandeur and value of the results.

TROLLOPE'S 'WEST INDIES AND SPANISH MAIN.'*

If the reader desires to read an amusing and not uninstructive work, we would recommend him to Mr Anthony Trollope's volume on the West Indies. All will probably not agree with the writer in sundry matters of opinion; some will think that he sometimes speaks rashly, if not flippantly, on matters of grave concern; nevertheless, he has produced a most readable book, which at the very least is eminently suggestive, and may lead to a better understanding on that terribly difficult and controverted subject—the importation of coolie labour.

It was in the early part of the present year that Mr Trollope visited the West Indies and Spanish Main, and we believe his mission was of an official character; but whatever were his professional duties, they are not alluded to, and the volume is made up entirely of matters of general observation. Opening with an account of Jamaica, he presents a graphic picture of the woebegone appearance of the two principal towns—Kingston and Spanish Town. This last-mentioned town, the seat of government, resembles, says he, 'a city of the dead. There are long streets in which no human inhabitant is ever seen. In others, a silent old negro woman may be sitting at an open door, or a child playing, solitary, in the dust.' In the square containing the government offices, 'all the walls are of a dismal dirty yellow; and a stranger cannot but think that the colour is owing to the dreadfully prevailing disease of the country. In this square there are no sounds; men and women never frequent it; nothing enters it but sunbeams! The glare from those walls seems to forbid that men and women should come there. The houses are very low, and when there is any sun in the heavens, it can enter those streets; and in those heavens there is always a burning, broiling sun. But the place is not wholly deserted. There is here the most frightfully hideous race of pigs that ever made a man ashamed to own himself a bacon-eating biped. I have never done much in pigs myself, but I believe that pigly grace consists in plumpness and comparative shortness—in shortness, above all, of the face and nose. The Spanish Town pigs are never plump. They are the very ghosts of swine, consisting entirely of bones and bristles. Their backs are long, their ribs are long, their legs are long, but, above all, their heads and noses are hideously long. These brutes prowl about in the sun, and glare at the unfrequent strangers with their starved eyes, as though doubting themselves whether, by some little exertion, they might not become beasts of prey.'

Having, in this desolate piggish city, visited the governor, the author tries to consume a few hours in walking about till he could return by railway. 'I moved slowly round the square, and by the time that I had reached an opposite corner, all my clothes were wet through. On I went, however, down one dead street and up another. I saw no one but pigs, and almost envied them their fleshlessness. I turned another corner, and I came upon the square again. That seemed to me the lowest depth of all that fiery Pandemonium, and with a quickened step I passed through but a corner of it. But the sun blazed even fiercer and fiercer. Should I go back and ask for a seat, if it were but on a bench in the government scullery, among the female negroes? Something I must do, or there would soon be an end of me. There must be some inn in the place, if I could only find it. I could not allow myself to perish there, in the middle of Spanish Town, without an effort.' At length he discovers a house of public entertainment, the Wellington Tavern, 'a miserable hole,' where he finds shelter for two hours from that frightfully scorching sun; and so lives to get back to Kingston.

Some of the inns are tolerable. In these resorts, as at the private houses, the household servants are almost all black, and their manners to a stranger very strange—not absolutely uncivil, but easy, free, and patronising to a very absurd degree. We think, however, that Mr Trollope might at anyrate have spoken civilly to them, as it appears he did not, according to his own shewing:

'"Halloo, old fellow! how about that bath?" I said one morning to a lad who had been commissioned to see a bath filled for me. He was cleaning boots at the time, and went on with his employment sedulously, as though he had heard not a word. But he was over-sedulous, and I saw that he heard me. "I say, how about that bath?" I continued. But he did not move a muscle. "Put down these boots, sir," I said, going up to him, "and go and do as I bid you." "Who you call fellow? You speak to a gen'leman gen'lemanly, and den he fill the bath." "James," said I, "might I trouble you to leave those boots, and see the bath filled for me?" and I bowed to him. "Es, sir," he answered, returning my bow; "go at once." And so he did, perfectly satisfied. Had he imagined, however, that I was quizzing him, in all probability he would not have gone at all.' This anecdote does not speak very highly for our author's politeness, for why not be polite to a negro shoeblack as well as to any one else?

Mr Trollope travelled over a large part of Jamaica, chiefly on horseback, for the roads are in many places totally unfit for wheeled carriages, and often there are no roads at all; rivers also require to be forded, steeps to be climbed, and much rough work of all kinds to be undertaken. The scenery is described to be magnificent, the capabilities of the soil prodigious, the growth of plants and fruits excessively luxuriant. Thrown on the hospitality of the planters, our author received from them all possible kindness, although, in a variety of instances, it could scarce be well afforded. The finest portions of that fine island are said to be in a state of decay. Labour at a price that will give a fair return, is not to be had. Here, we touch on the sore that afflicts this once thriving settlement. The author, to do him justice, regrets neither emancipation nor the withdrawal of a protecting duty on colonial sugar. Both movements were proper and inevitable. 'From that sin of slavery we have cleansed ourselves;' but then comes the difficulty of getting the free labourers to work for wages with that fidelity and regularity—that sacrifice of leisure during crop-time—without which a sugar-estate cannot be advantageously cultivated.

On this delicate subject, one is perplexed with the variety of opinions; yet we cannot but think that Mr Trollope has hit on one fertile source of disorganisation in the labour-market of Jamaica—the ease with which unoccupied or deserted land may be taken possession of, unchallenged, by the negro population. Freed from control, and with plenty of land for nothing, 'the negro has had unbounded facility of squatting, and has availed himself of it freely. To recede from civilisation, and become again savage—as savage as the laws of the community will permit—has been to his taste. I believe that he would altogether retrograde, if left to himself.' It is very right that the negro should be free, but if he decline to work after ten o'clock in the morning—if high pay will not bribe him—what is to become of the sugar-grower? 'No, tankee, massa; me tired now; me no want more money.' Or perhaps it is: 'No; workee no more; money no 'nuff; workee no pay.' These are the answers which the suppliant planter receives when, at ten o'clock, he begs his negro neighbours to go a second time into the corn-fields, and earn a second shilling—or implores them to work more than four days a week—or solicits them at Christmas-time to put up with a short ten days' holiday. His canes are ripe, and his mill should be active; or else they are foul with weeds, and the hogsheads will be very short if they be not cleansed. He is anxious enough, for all his work depends upon it. But what does the negro care? 'No; me no more workee now.'

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* One volume 8vo, Chapman and Hall, London.

The proper explanation of this alleged disinclination to work, is undoubtedly the power of living without work. We would not dispute the fact, that in too many cases the negro was cheated with deceptive representations as to the value of his labour, and has resented that treatment accordingly; and certainly the negro is quite justified in not being anybody's servant if he can help it. He can at any moment, with wife and family, march off into the bush—build himself a hut—scratch a few acres—and with pigs, poultry, fruits, and roots in overflowing abundance, live a jolly, easy, do-nothing existence. Did similar circumstances exist in Great Britain, we should have a speedy solution of the difficulties between employer and employed. But, then, it will very naturally be asked, why not prevent this system of squatting?—the land belongs either to the crown or to some private individual. True, but where are you to get an army of white sheriff's-officers to look after this business? There are only fifteen thousand whites in Jamaica altogether, and several hundred thousand negroes; and, above all, there is a raging sun, which renders white physical activity impracticable. In a word, the thing cannot be done, and we may as well give up speaking about it.

Our author, in his half-jocular way, bears somewhat too hard on the negro's disposition to idleness; nor does he state the case quite fairly when he alludes to the attempts which have been made to see justice done to this unfortunate race. 'The negro slave was ill-treated—ill-treated, at anyrate, in that he was a slave; and therefore by that reaction which prevails in all human matters, it is now thought necessary to wrap him up in cotton, and put him under a glass case. The wind must not blow on him too roughly, and the rose-leaves on which he sleeps should not be ruffled. He has been a slave; therefore, let him be a Sybarite. His father did an ample share of work; therefore, let the son be made free from his portion in the primeval curse. The friends of the negro, if they do not actually use such arguments, endeavour to carry out such a theory. But one feels that the joke has almost been carried too far, when one is told that it is necessary to protect the labour-market in Jamaica, and save the negro from the dangers of competition. No immigration of labourers into that happy country should be allowed, lest the rate of wages be lowered, and the unfortunate labourer be made more dependent on his master! But if the unfortunate labourers could be made to work, say four days a week, and on an average eight hours a day, would not that be an advantage?' Now, as far as we have been able to judge, no man in England wishes the negro to be exempted from the ordinary obligation to work for his livelihood; and as regards the immigration of coolies, all that is wanted is, that it may be put on a humane and equitable footing; that no deception or cruelty shall be practised; and that the cost of importation shall not fall on the public revenue, to which the negroes themselves are contributors. Leaving these points, however, to the criticism of those who are more competent to deal with them, we return once more to this—that it is useless to expect negroes to work for a moderate hire so long as they are at liberty to squat; and the only remedy, though it may be a slow one, is, to impart a proper value to the lands of the colony by a free and honestly conducted system of imported coolie labour.

That an undue abundance of land is a main cause of the misfortunes of Jamaica planters, seems conclusive from the position of affairs in Barbadoes. Under the operation of precisely the same legislative measures, there is no want of labour in that well-managed and happy island—no cry of poverty, no need for coolies. The reason simply is, that while the whole of the land is appropriated and under cultivation, there is a dense population of negroes who must make their choice, as we do in England, between work and starvation. We are so patriotic as to imagine, that perhaps some slight share of the general prosperity is due to an early and large infusion of Scottish settlers—political exiles—who may have given a sturdy tone to the moral condition of the colonists; but the scarcity of land in proportion to the number of people who live upon it, is unquestionably the principal cause. Mr Trollope expresses the idea in one or two sentences: 'In Jamaica, Dominica, St Lucia, and Grenada, the negro, when emancipated, could squat and make himself happy; but in Barbadoes there was not an inch for him. When emancipation came, there was no squatting-ground for the poor Barbadian. He had still to work and make sugar—work quite as hard as when he was a slave. He had to do that, or starve; consequently, labour has been abundant in this island, and in this island only; and in all the West Indian troubles it has kept its head above water, and made sugar respectably—not, indeed, shewing much sugar-genius, or going ahead in the way of improvements, but paying twenty shillings in the pound, supporting itself, and earning its bread decently by the sweat of its brow. . . . There is not a rood of waste land in Barbadoes. It certainly is not the country for a gipsy immigration. Indeed, I doubt whether there is even room for a picnic.'

In the course of his rambles, the author visited Guiana, on the mainland of South America, low-lying, and of boundless fertility. Here, he says, in reference to coolie immigration, 'the bull has been taken by the horns,' and the colony is pushing on with uncommon spirit. Its success in thus importing Asiatic labourers, whose interests are said to be carefully guarded, he ascribes to the form of government, which, from its partially despotic character, is able to exercise an energy not to be reached by the broad representative system of Jamaica. How far he is correct in this surmise, we are not able to judge. Mr Trollope has evidently no great hope of immediate improvement where the coloured population has much to say in public affairs. The civilisation of the negroes he speaks of as only a kind of plating; and of their habit of imitating the usages of the whites, without regard to consistency, he offers some amusing anecdotes. With one of these we may conclude our notice.

Being one day in a shoemaker's shop at St Thomas, buying a pair of boots, 'a negro entered quickly, and in a loud voice said he wanted a pair of pumps. He was a labouring-man fresh from his labour. He had on an old hat—what, in Ireland, men would call a caubeen; he was in his shirt-sleeves, and was barefooted. As the only shopman was looking for my boots, he was not attended to at the moment. "Want a pair of pumps—directerly!" he roared out in a very dictatorial voice. "Sit down for a moment," said the shopman, "and I will attend to you." The man sat down in an odd fashion, holding up his feet from the floor. I looked on in amazement, thinking he was mad. "Give I a bit of carpet!" he screamed out, still holding up his feet, but with much difficulty. "Yes, yes," said the shopman, still searching for the boots. "Give I a bit of carpet directerly!" he again exclaimed. He was half-choked with anger and discomfort. The shopman gave him the carpet. Most men and women will remember that such bits of carpet are common in shoemakers' shops. They are supplied, I believe, in order that they who are delicate should not soil their stockings on the floor. The gentleman in search of the pumps had seen that people of dignity were supplied with such luxuries, and resolved to have his value for his money; but as he had on neither shoes nor stockings, the little bit of carpet was hardly necessary for his material comfort.'

AT THE POINT OF DEATH.

Mrs Malooney lies at the point of death. There is no doubt about it, if the parish doctor is to be credited. The coats of her stomach have frayed away and vanished in filamentous rags. The asthma has pumped all the breath nearly out of her body, and the stethoscope says there is not enough left to last many days longer. Her appetite has entirely deserted her for many a long day, and she is starved, shrivelled, and shrunk to that degree that her poor old body resembles an anatomical specimen more than it does anything else. She asks for nothing, and takes nothing, and nothing in the world interests her any longer. It is all over with Mrs Malooney, so long the general mother of all Alligator Close, in Little St Giles's, London. Like a good Catholic, as she is, the moribund matron has sent for Father Gahagan, and 'made her sowl'—the worthy father has administered extreme unction—and surely there is nothing more for the good dame to do now than just to slip quietly out of the world, making as little fuss as may be.

Never believe it! Mother Malooney was never in her life before the object of such profound interest as she is now. All the Alligators are galvanised into compassionate sympathies at the prospect of her assured demise, and extraordinary manifestations are making on all sides, indicative of their common concern; but chiefly at the Pig and Triangle, at the corner of the close. In that popular and odoriferous hostelry, the shamrock is exhibited in the window rudely involved in bows of black ribbon, among the folds of which is stuck the smallest of visiting-cards inscribed, in a kind of sepulchral-looking print, with the words: 'Mrs Malooney's Meet, Wednesday, June 12, at 9 o'clock precisely;' and below hangs a placard informing the benevolently disposed that 'tickets may be had within.'

This is the first time that the name of the general mother has ever figured in print—barring, as she would say, some few incidental mentions, which may not have been to her discredit, in the newspaper reports of police, or even Old Bailey cases—and these tickets are Mrs Malooney's cards of ceremony, issued for the first and last time from her death-bed. They will circulate far and wide, these little paper summonses; for forty years and more of motherhood in London's densest rookery have made the Malooney a household word, if that term may be applied to a race who, for the most part, have no households—the vagabond and migratory sons and daughters of the Emerald Isle all London over. Thousands of brawny hodmen, who have supped their nightly stew from the Malooney caldron, will recognise the signal, even if they do not respond to it; and any one cognizant of all the circumstances and career of the beldam now *in extremis*, might augur without much risk that there will be a pretty full gathering when the 'meet' comes off.

What is the 'meet' about, do you ask? You had better put the question to the Malooney's daughter, Judith, who keeps the fruit-stall at the corner of Tottenham Court Road. If you should interrogate her in the character of a customer, perhaps you may succeed in eliciting the information which, failing any such application on your part, we will be courteous enough to communicate. Know, then, that, Mrs Malooney having made up her mind to die, and no mistake at all about it, United Ireland—in the persons of her friends and patrons, intimates and congeners—have made up their minds, or are to be persuaded to make up their minds, to give her, *more majorum*, a glorious 'wake' between death and burial. The tickets to the 'meet,' you will understand, are to be sold not at any fixed price—if that were the rule, the probability is that very few would find purchasers—but for whatever the friends of the beneficiary, not one-third of whom will make any use of them, will give for them. They will be tendered to every hard-working Hibernian with a heart in his breast and a sixpence in his pocket, and will be readily relinquished for anything in the shape of a coin, but not surrendered gratuitously. The holders of tickets will be admitted to the 'meet,' but not to the drink—which will flow freely enough on that occasion—unless they choose to pay for it.

And now, be pleased to imagine that the 12th of June has dawned, and waned, and deepened into night—that we are standing in Alligator Close, and that the hour of the 'meet' has arrived. If you are provided with a ticket, and do not mind elbowing your way through a mob of united Hibernians in sympathetic mood, you may manage to squeeze in with us, and see for yourself what takes place. There is no apartment in the Pig and Triangle that is half large enough to contain the ticket-holders, and, as a consequence, they are marched, as fast as they enter, through the building into the skittle-ground in the rear, which has been temporarily fitted up with long tables and benches for their accommodation. There, at a trestle placed crosswise at the end of the alley, on the precise spot where the untuneful nine have so often descended ingloriously at the instigation of that huge lignum-vitæ bullet launched at them by the brawny hodmen, sits the rather blowsy Pomona Judith Malooney in the character of chief mourner *in futuro*. There is a doleful expression on her face, and the corners of her mouth gravitate tragically enough; but there is a keen sparkle in her eye at the same time, which glances from side to side as 'the boys' swarm in, betraying a manifest attention to business, and which is not undemonstrative of inward satisfaction. On the board before her are displayed the 'effects' of her as yet undeceased parent, the general mother. These consist of sundry specimens of cracked crockery-ware, a brace of flat-irons, some fathoms of clothes-line, a tin kettle or two, and the great family caldron with its sooty suspending-chain.

The area is nearly choke-full when the proceedings commence; and as these are more characteristic than curious, and might not pleasantly interest the reader were they chronicled in detail, we shall endeavour to dismiss them with brevity. Notwithstanding that the place is open to the sky, the crowd makes it almost insufferably hot, and there is an unanimous outcry for beer, for the circulation of which the landlord has made laudable provision, by the establishment of a causeway for his pot-laden waiters along the tops of the tables, round the whole enclosure. When the general thirst is a little assuaged, there rises a cry for Mike O'Brien; and after a little coquetting with the popular voice, Mike accordingly makes his appearance, popping up suddenly like a conjuror's jack-in-the-box, just in the rear of the now lachrymose Judith. Mike O'Brien is a natural-born orator and rhetorician, a boy that 'has the larnin',' and knows how to make the most of it; he is clad in seedy black, and shews a vivacious countenance under a shock of dense black hair. He is received with a torrent of welcomes exploded from all sides.

'Woo! wurra! ye're the boy for a spache any-how!'

'Whitheroo! long life to ye, Mike! give 'em a spanker, me jewel!'

'Wisht there, wull ye, and hark to O'Brien, the boy!'

And so on, with variations in the Celtic tongue which we are not qualified to report, amidst a chorus of congratulatory yells and hootings, swelling louder and louder every moment; during which agreeable demonstrations the orator gesticulates rather theatrically—somewhat after the manner of an itinerant professor doing the Statues on the platform of a travelling-stage. At length, taking advantage of a comparative lull, he sweeps the long locks from his forehead, and launching forth his right arm, gives utterance in a voice that would make itself heard amidst the roar of a cataract.

'Gintlemin,' says the O'Brien—'Gintlemin all, ye're makin' a divole of a row, an' it's a question if there's half-a-dozen of ye know what ye're bawlin' about. Shure, I'm not going to reproach ye with that—small blame to you, gintlemin, seeing that such is the natural order of things, and has been, from time immemorial, all over the wurruld. The more the row, the less the knowledge, is a maxim that holds good at the senate and the bar, as well as in the assemblies of the people. But, *moderatio in omnibus est*, as the great poet says; so close the hinges of your maxillaries, and lend me your ears, and, faith, I'll illuminate your benighted intelligences, and tell ye in a twinklin' what has brought ye here.'

There is a low murmur of applause while the orator takes breath after this exordium, and prepares to address himself to the task of explanation. Having informed the assembly of the sad circumstances of the general mother—of the utter hopelessness of her recovery—of her preparation for death, and the administration of extreme unction by the hands of Father Gahagan—he calls upon them to testify their regard for the departing woman by bidding bountifully for the effects to be disposed of, which are now before them, in charge of the about-to-be-orphaned Judith. Delicacy prevents him from adding—what, however, is perfectly well known to every person present—that as the goods to be disposed of will all be put up to raffle, the names of all persons appearing in the several lists, and having against them a certain sum, will also appear in the list of those friends who will be bidden to the wake of the aged Malooney, as soon as, by departing this life, she has rendered that ceremony practicable. 'Remimber, boys,' says the orator in conclusion, 'this is the last and only chance ye will have of acknowledging yer obligations to her who will soon be no more. *Præteritos non possumus revocare*—you can't call the dead to life again. What you do or don't do now, is done or undone for ever! Close your hands to-day, and if you open them to-morrow full of untold gowld, 'tis too late! Remimber that, I tell ye—and now to business.'

With the mention of business, the yelling and hubbub, the clattering of pots and libations of beer, are resumed; and in the midst of a din that would appal a pawnbroker's auctioneer, the ensuing proceedings are despatched with a rapidity more than remarkable. The rusty goods are put up to raffle, Mr O'Brien recording the names of the competitors, and Judith receiving the cash. At first, as fast as a lot is won, it is put up again, the benevolent winner declining to receive it. Judith, who throws the dice for everybody, has enough to do, but amidst all her bewildering occupations, she takes care to pouch the cash as fast as it comes in. By and by, three or four lots are in competition at once, and now Judith, whose pocket is getting well lined, declines to receive them back after the die is cast, and delivers them to their owners. Towards midnight the scene grows wild and half ferocious—the crockery is seen flying about in shivers, the pots, kettles, and flat-irons are swung aloft in brawny arms, and one expects every moment to see them whirled among the throng. Fortunately, the landlord has stopped the supplies of beer; and now a squad of the night-police are seen at the door, and they are doing their best, in a half-jocose but thoroughly determined way, to clear the premises. This is not accomplished in a hurry; but at length, by dint of wheedling, coaxing, threatening, and shouldering, the skittle-ground is evacuated, and Judith accepting the hospitality of the landlord for the night, the doors of the Pig and Triangle are barred against all comers. But for some hours afterwards, Alligator Close is in a state of commotion and uproar. Spite of all the police can do—though they interfere no more than they are obliged to do—there is a rather fierce fight for the effects of the undeceased, the persons who had won them first not being able clearly to recognise the stronger claim of those who had won them last. In the end, the real effects of the 'meet' and the raffle consist far more of broken heads and body bruises than of anything in the shape of goods and chattles; and it is said that such was the recklessness of the benevolent Alligators in that nocturnal shindy, that Judith, on rising in the morning, was enabled to collect, and did collect, all the effects of her bed-ridden mother, barring the broken crockery and the few fathoms of clothes-line.

And now, what words shall we find with which to relate the final *dénouement* and upshot of this veracious history? Verily, we need the vocabulary of Mr O'Brien himself to do it justice; for surely never was there an instance of such depravity placed upon the record as it is our misfortune to chronicle in the case of that old Mother Malooney. But it must be told. Just as the disinterested and benevolent sympathisers of the 'meet' were expecting to be bidden to the wake, came a rumour that Mrs Malooney, instead of deceasing decently, as she ought to have done, had one morning sat up in bed, and called loudly for a noggin of gin! More than that, she had actually lighted her short pipe, her dear dudeen, and after a few whiffs, had begun clamouring for stout; and when Father Gahagan came to see how she was going off, she had sent him away with a flea in his ear, and finally, to cut the matter short, had refused to decease at all. Here was a scandalous affair! Who shall depict the indignation and disgust of the Alligators at this unprincipled and atrocious swindle? They all felt themselves shamefully treated, and gave vociferous vent to their abuse of the old beldam who had so egregiously taken them in—and who, worse still, had humbugged the priest by wickedly refusing to take herself off, as in duty bound, after 'resaving the blessed unction.' Meanwhile, the old dame got better and grew stronger in the precise ratio of the scorn and contempt her convalescence excited. When she got about again, however, as she did before August, she discovered that Alligator Close was, alas! no longer a home for her, and that she must seek some other locality in which to suspend her hospitable caldron. Lucky for her, life had its compensations. The proceeds of the 'meet' amounted to a comfortable little sum, and since she has been pushed away, as it were, from the shelter of the grave, it was fortunate at least that she had something to fall back upon. With her daughter Judith she has withdrawn from the home of the Alligators, and awaits, on a more peaceful shore, the moment when she shall be called upon to fulfil what, not without a sentiment of compunction for her involuntary offence, she conceives to be her covenant with Father Gahagan.

NEW YORK TO LONDON IN 48 HOURS!

Exactly three-quarters of a century ago, an Italian, named Lunardi, who had come over to this country, was ridiculed in the London newspapers and coffee-houses—for no other reason than that he proposed to sail through the air in a balloon. Several ascents had been previously made indeed, and with success, but they had occurred in France, and therefore did not particularly recommend Lunardi to the favourable consideration of the French-despising and unbelieving inhabitants of the British Isles. He was looked upon as an impostor; and the immense crowd, including the Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV.), which assembled in the Artillery Ground, Moorfields, on September 15, 1784, to witness him make the first ascent that had been made in Britain, were animated by anything but friendly feelings towards him. It was intended that another gentleman should accompany Lunardi on his trip, but it was discovered, at the last moment, that the balloon was not sufficiently buoyant to take up so great a weight. This fact tended to increase the hostile disposition of the audience. A new and smaller gallery had to be substituted, and this was scarcely completed when it was announced to Lunardi that an accident had happened to the balloon which would prevent his aërial voyage. In face of the incredulous and hostile mob, this intimation, according to Lunardi's own account, 'almost deprived him of his senses;' and though he instantly found that the injury was trifling, he was so alarmed, that he forgot to take his instruments for observation along with him. 'I threw myself into the gallery,' says he, 'determined to hazard no further accidents that might consign me and the balloon to the fury of the populace, which I saw on the point of bursting.' The ropes were cut, and the balloon slowly and majestically rose with the adventurous aëronaut, in the sight, and amid the plaudits of all the people, who were now ten times more enthusiastic than they had been adverse before. The ascent was a most successful one. After a voyage of two hours and a quarter, M. Lunardi landed in a field in Hertfordshire, among a crowd of rustics, who at first refused to yield any assistance to one who came on what they called 'the devil's horse.' On the spot where Lunardi alighted, a country gentleman erected a stone with this curious inscription: 'Let posterity know, and knowing, be astonished, that on the 15th day of September 1784, Vincent Lunardi, of Lucca, in Tuscany, the first aërial traveller in Britain, mounting from the Artillery Ground in London, and traversing the regions of the air for two hours and fifteen minutes, in this spot revisited the earth. On this rude monument for ages be recorded that wondrous enterprise, successfully achieved by the powers of chemistry and the fortitude of man; that improvement in science which the Great Author of all knowledge, patronising by His providence the inventions of mankind, hath graciously permitted, to their benefit and His own eternal glory.'

Lunardi now became quite a hero; and next year, when he visited Edinburgh, he was presented with the freedom of the city, and was also made a burgess of several other Scotch towns. The balloon in which Lunardi made his ascents is described as of pear-shape, '30 feet high, and 23 broad, and made of silk of different colours.'

The incredulity, the alarm, the astonishment, and enthusiasm alternately excited by these first attempts at aërostation amongst us, are feelings of the past; and we are now disposed to wonder how they could ever have existed. Immense improvements have taken place in balloons and ballooning since that period, but none of the many practical benefits which were predicted, after people had got over their first apprehension and amazement, have resulted therefrom. The great drawback to balloon-transit is, of course, the difficulties of regulating the ascents and descents, and of directing the course of the machine to any desired place; and there is a growing belief in the public mind, that these difficulties are insurmountable. Recent experiments in America, however, would seem to point to the possibility of systematic and useful aërial navigation; and we have recalled the account of the first balloon ascent in Great Britain, in order that it may contrast with the latest and most gigantic undertaking in this way—that of Mr Lowe, of New York, who promises to cross the Atlantic Ocean in two days, or at most, two and three-quarters; and also to indicate how much education tends to deprive us of the capability of astonishment. We often hear of the credulity of ignorance, but far more credulous is knowledge. For one who believed in the possibility of the very easy feat of M. Lunardi, twenty will now have faith in the extremely difficult project of Mr Lowe; and were he to accomplish it successfully to-morrow, scarcely any one would be amazed; certainly no such stone would mark the place of his descent as that which commemorates the two hours' trip of Lunardi.

Eight months ago, we learn from the American papers, Mr Lowe, an experienced aëronaut, commenced the construction of an aërial ship—which is, in fact, an immense balloon—to carry him across the Atlantic. The greatest circumference of the balloon is 387 feet; and it is computed that it will hold no less than 700,000 cubic feet of gas—five times more than the most capacious balloon ever before constructed. More than 6000 yards of double-twilled muslin have been used in the formation of this gas-holder—the top part, where most resistance is required, being composed of three thicknesses of the material, which has been, as far as possible, rendered impervious to gas and rain alike, by several coats of varnish. The balloon will be protected in the usual way by netting, strengthened, of course, in proportion to the size of the globe. From it, as in the case of ordinary balloons, will depend the car, and beneath that again, the life-boat. More than fifteen miles of cord have been used in the netting, which weighs 325 pounds. Fifteen feet below the 'concentrating hoop,' to which the netting is made fast, hangs the passenger-car. It is circular in form, and has a circumference of 20 feet, with a depth of 4 feet. Curtains, in which are glass windows, descend from the hoop, and fasten on tight to the edge of the car all round; and as a further protection against cold, and for certain subsidiary cooking purposes, a stove, in which heat is generated by the slaking of lime, has been provided. The life-boat, which is suspended 20 feet beneath, is communicated with through a trap-door in the bottom of the car by means of a substantial ladder. The boat is 30 feet long, 7 feet broad, and 4 feet deep. In this boat is fixed an apparatus, the invention of Mr Lowe, which he asserts will enable him to elevate and depress the machine at pleasure, without the slightest expenditure of either gas or ballast. He will thus, if the plan bears out its promise, be enabled to take advantage of favouring, and to avoid contrary currents. The apparatus is somewhat similar in character to a winnowing fan, and it is anticipated that it will also obviate the rotatory motion hitherto characteristic of balloons. It is driven by an Ericsson caloric engine of four-horse power, which is also adapted to turn the paddle-wheels affixed to the boat, in case the aëronauts have to take to the water—a possibility not to be unanticipated. The boat is also fitted with masts and sails, nautical instruments, and all other equipments necessary for a marine voyage. As a further means of obviating the expenditure, or waste of gas, Mr Lowe has provided himself with two large copper vessels, weighing, respectively, 100 pounds and 200 pounds. These are to be filled with condensed gas, and connected by a pipe with the great globe. Any loss of gas by leakage will be supplied from these vessels by a force-pump, and by the same method, gas can be abstracted from the balloon, when it attains too great a height, and forced into the condensers. These vessels will also serve another purpose. Supposing the balloon to be depressed by the effect of rain or other influence, one of them, to which will be attached a rope of considerable length, can be thrown overboard into the sea, where it will float. The balloon will be at once relieved, and will rise to the full extent of its tether, at which height it will sail along until it attains sufficient buoyancy to lift the condenser, which will then be pulled up again into the machine. This part of the invention does not seem very feasible. The difficulty of raising such a weight to any great height could, we think, only be overcome by mechanical appliances, of which there is no mention. This by the way, however, our object just now being to describe, not to discuss. Another invention of Mr Lowe's is a sounding-line. Weighted at the end, this line will depend from the car a mile or more; and ribbons attached to it, at various distances, will shew the direction of currents. These, with one or two anchors of peculiar construction, barometers, compasses, &c., complete the equipment of the new air-ship, *The City of New York*, which is to make the passage from New York to England in forty-eight hours, or, at the very utmost, sixty-four. 'The whole apparatus,' says a New York paper of the 24th September, 'will be completed in a few days, and will be ready to start as soon as the weather shall have become settled after the equinoctial storm.' The balloon with its appurtenances weighs 3½ tons, and its lifting capacity will be equal to about 22½ tons, its total cost being about 22,000 dollars. The crew is to consist of eight persons, grandiloquently described in the American papers as 'the aëronaut, four scientific sea-navigators, two scientific landsmen, and the *historian!*' Fabulous sums have been offered by some Americans for the privilege of coming over in the aërial vessel, but on no condition are passengers to be carried on the experimental trip.

That balloons are capable of a speed even greater than that required to cross the Atlantic in the shortest time mentioned by Mr Lowe, has been made manifest by a voyage in America, by Mr La Mountain, on the 22d of last September, when a distance of about 300 miles was accomplished in 4 hours. This gives a rate of 75 miles per hour; and as it is somewhat less than 3000 miles from New York to Britain, it follows that a uniform rate of speed in a direct course would bridge the intervening ocean in 40 hours. Can this direct route be taken? Can the aid of favouring breezes, to insure continuously so great a speed, be secured? These are questions which Mr Lowe has yet to answer.

But if the result of the experiment be as anticipated, the *Great Eastern* must hide her diminished (figure) head.

THE STRAY SUNBEAM.

A SUNBEAM stole from behind a cloud,
And glanced in gay mood o'er the valley below,
It joined in the mirth of the revelling crowd,
And played in the chamber where life ebbed slow.

Wherever it came, it was welcome to all—
To the smiling cheek it imparted a grace;
It gilded the prison, the cottage, the hall,
It brought a warm glow to the sick man's face.

'Welcome to all,' did I say? But, hold!
There were places and persons that greeted it not:
A miser was counting his hordes of gold;
A red-faced housewife had put on the pot;

A thief had his hand in an honest man's fob;
An owl was about to swoop on its prey—
For each and for all it proved a bad job,
And all owing, too, to that mischievous ray.

For his own shadow frightened the miser so much,
That he raised a loud cry, and made known his great riches;
And his own shadow foiled the pickpocket's fine touch,
So the watch remained safe in old Allworthy's breeches;

The pot was beginning to bubble and simmer,
When the Sunbeam crept softly, and puffed out the flame;
The owl was obliged to wait till it grew dimmer,
And cursed—while the mouse blessed—his stars for that same.

'Well, come,' said the beam, 'now I've had my diversion,
Not agreeable to all is fair weather, I find;
One hails me with joy, I'm another's aversion,
For sunshine and shadow are things of the mind.'

On Saturday, the 7th of January 1860, *will be commenced in this Journal,*

A STORY, entitled

THE BATEMAN HOUSEHOLD, AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF 'STORIES AND SKETCHES,' &c. &c.

To be continued every week until completed.

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A DAY WITH SANDILLI.

How few of us now care to know anything about Caffraria, or think of the time when a Caffre war was our great national bugbear, and the names of Sandilli and Macomo household words, as suggestive of defeat and trouble to the British nation as that of Abd-el-Kader was to the French, or Garibaldi is in these days to the Austrians.

The fierce struggle in the Crimea, the horrors of the Indian revolt, and the carnage of Magenta and Solferino, have well-nigh obliterated the memory of the time when Englishmen pored over the news from the Cape with anxious eagerness, sorrowing for the untimely fate of Fordyce and Wilmot, and glorying in the gallant deeds of Cathcart and Eyre. In 1856, however, the memory of those days was still green in England; while at the Cape, even the hot excitement of the Crimean struggle then raging, could not lessen the absorbing interest with which the English traveller threaded the deep glades of the Waterkloof, or gazed upon the wooded slopes of the Amatola Mountains. Sandilli and Macomo, unlike the nameless leaders of the Indian rebellion, had won a certain respect by their daring and endurance; and though driven from their fastnesses in the mountains, were living in a tract of country especially allotted to them, and ruling the still powerful Gaika nation in all the pride of savage chieftainhood.

Anxious not to leave South Africa before I had seen these two famous heroes, I gratefully accepted the kind offer of Mr B——, the Caffre commissioner resident at the Duhne Post, and early on the morning of the 29th of February, started on a ride to the Gaika court. The morning was warm and bright, as we rode across the boundary of the crown reserve, and entered Sandilli's country. The Amatola Mountains had subsided into the plain some miles to the left, so there were no marked heights to give feature to the views, though the country, with its swelling undulations and checkered surface of bush and green-sward, was singularly beautiful. Here and there, patches of the dwarf *Erythrina*, with its vivid scarlet blossom, glowed like fire in the sunlight; and the large pink umbels of the Candelabra lily shone on every side, amid beds of deep blue *Lobelia* and purple *Cineraria;* while ropes of yellow *Mesembrianthemum* and dark crimson *Ipomœas* of large size trailed across our path. The bushes of thorny mimosa were wreathed with orange clusters of *Tecoma Capensis*, a plant as common in Caffraria as the Traveller's Joy in an Isle of Wight hedgerow; while the pale gray of the *Plumbago*, also a most characteristic shrub, mingled with the white jessamine, and put the thickets here and there into decent half-mourning, giving a pleasant relief to the eye, satiated with the blaze of vivid colour that prevailed. After riding for an hour or two, we came in sight of a cluster of huts, like gigantic bee-hives, dotting the hillside; and hoping to gain some intelligence of Sandilli, pulled up before the palace-hut of Xlo-Xlo, the most sanguinary of all the Caffre chiefs. Finding him from home, we agreed to await his return; and crawling through the low dark doorway, we sat down, and found ourselves the centre of attraction to eight or nine unearthly-looking beings, swathed in blankets, who, with glaring eyes and distended nostrils, were watching our every movement.

Before long, the blankets were withdrawn, and the owners, in all the glory of bead-necklaces and tiger-tooth girdles, emerged from their folds. Two girls next entered, and then a toothless Haindan, naked to the waist, an appalling spectacle, who crawled in, followed by a greasy savage, bearing a basket of sour curds and a gourd-shell, with which he proceeded to regale the assemblage. Fortunately, the hut was so crowded that I managed to conceal my aversion to this mark of kindly attention; and an altercation ensuing between my entertainer, who was pouring a skin of milk into a narrow-mouthed gourd, and the Haindan, who insisted on squatting in the doorway, and obscuring the light, I contrived to evade a second mouthful; before long, the lady was plucked suddenly backward with a yell, and a tall muscular man, naked as he was born, crawled in and shook hands with us, and I found myself in the presence of Xlo-Xlo, the man of murders and atrocities that have made his name a byword even among his own people.

After a short conference, we gave our present of tobacco, and receiving the gratifying intelligence that Sandilli was over the river, attending the marriage-ceremony of one of his near kinsmen, rode off in high expectation; but on reaching the drift or ford, found the water so high that we were compelled to turn off our road, and try our fortune lower down.

By so doing, we managed not only to cross the river, but were favoured with an interview with Sandilli's principal wife, who was fast asleep in a large hut, snoring like an alderman. Up she jumped on hearing our approach, and came out to greet us, attended by other members of his harem; and a prettier savage I never saw than the young chieftainess, as she stood coyly playing with her ivory ornaments, a pastime which she varied occasionally by chasing fleas through the folds of her cow-skin kaross. The other women were horrors to behold, smeared with brown ochre and cow-dung; but they volunteered some useful information, and ran down with us to the drift, shouting and screaming as we splashed cautiously through the swollen torrent. The banks were gay with the scarlet and yellow heads of the handsome *Clivia Nobilis*, and the stiff ungraceful fronds of a lofty arborescent fern (*Cyathea Dregeana*) rose from the water-side, contrasting curiously with the perfect beauty of a bed of Maiden Hair (*Adiantum*) beneath. Mounting the opposite hill, round which the Galonga flows, and obtaining pleasant peeps into the valley as we rode along, we soon came in sight of some distant kraals, one of which was pointed out as the scene of festivity.

Long before this, however, we had overtaken groups of natives on their way to the revels. Men in long brown blankets, assagai in hand, and women with strange beaded head-dresses, all clamorous for *azali* (tobacco), were now passed continually; and at length a dense swarm of dusky figures on a distant hillside told we were nearing the scene of action. What was the precise ceremony going on baffled conjecture. I saw a multitude of people in and around the circle of mud-huts forming the kraal. Lines of swarthy savages were bounding up and down, now altogether, now alternately, now in twos and threes, like the internal arrangement of a piano when a child is learning its chords. A confused din of voices filled the air, through which broke at times some wild cry, which died away into a dull monotonous chant, succeeded again by a confused discord of voices. A forest of assagais quivered in the air, and as suddenly disappeared; and, startled and wondering, I followed the commissioner through the lane of yelling savages that opened to admit us, and riding into the inner circle of huts, we dismounted, and awaited the coming of the Gaika chief.

A tall, fine-looking man, with a withered leg and slight halt in his gait, had arisen from the multitude, and followed by four or five others, was slowly advancing towards us. He touched B——'s hand, and then mine; and some leopard-skins having been spread on a patch of fresh cow-dung, to make us quite comfortable, we all sat down in a group apart; and I had leisure, during the opening of the complimentary duet that followed, to scan the faces of Sandilli, chief of all the Gaikas, and his counsellors.

Stark-naked, with the exception of a leopard-skin pendent from their shoulders, and a few ornaments which I will describe hereafter, and smeared all over with a coating of red clay, they sat, or rather squatted, in the most hideous and ungraceful attitudes, their blankets having fallen in careless folds around them. True negroes in feature, with the thickest lips and woolliest hair I ever saw, their eyes had none of the vacant stare of the West Indian Creole, or the stolid look of the Cape Hottentot; some were even handsome, and many of them models for a sculptor. Sandilli was adorned with a necklace of large cowries, and a row of party-coloured beads round his neck; a string of blue beads in his right ear, and a cumbrous ivory armlet above one elbow, completed his attire, which was undistinguished by any mark of superior rank, many of his subjects surpassing him in the number and brilliancy of their decorations.

By his side sat his brother 'Dundas,' and his nephew 'Fyne,' both named after English officers—the former, a short muscular man, of light colour, with far more hair on his face than is possessed by the Caffre generally, a peculiarity shared also by Sandilli; the latter, a strongly-built, good-looking young fellow, with a pleasant open expression of countenance. Highly thought of by his people, he was at that time an important personage at the Gaika court. These observations, however, were not made all at once; for a long time my attention, after the first curious glance, was wholly absorbed by the marvellous scene before me, and certainly a wilder or more utterly savage spectacle never greeted a stray tourist.

We were sitting in front of a wide semicircle of huts on the bare hillside; behind, and far away to the left, swarmed the dusky warriors of Caffraria, covering the ground to the number of some thousands, a constant stream passing and repassing to the mystic dance. Immediately before us, looming through a thick cloud of dust and steam, which rose from their heated bodies, were seen the muscular figures of the dancers, as linked arm-in-arm, and forming a long line four deep, they bounded into the air with convulsive springs, now advancing a step, now retreating, while their assagais quivered above them, and a deep, hollow, and fearful sound—a sound between a gasp and a shudder—burst forth from their convulsed breasts, and kept time with the dull tramp of the leapers.

Behind stood the women, clothed in karosses of rich furs, and head-dresses of beaded leather, forming a sort of savage orchestra, and encouraging the dancers by a strange monotonous chant, accompanied by clapping of hands, and a regular swaying movement of the body from side to side. From this group a line of women, in single file, with slow and solemn step, were pacing—I cannot call it walking, so slow was the movement—to join a dense crowd of their sisters on our right, from whence another file proceeded to take their places. The savage earnestness of the performers, combined with the harsh monotonous chant, the regular tramp of the leapers, and the unearthly sound, which I can only describe as shuddering, struck me with a sensation of horror which it was some time before I could conquer. A train of attendants now appeared, bearing baskets of sour milk, which they placed before us; but our luncheon-bag having been called for, Sandilli declined to partake too freely of his own viands, and devoted his whole attention to our cake—not from a puerile love of the delicacy, as he subsequently informed us, but because the last time he tasted it his favourite wife had, two hours afterwards, presented him with a fine boy; and as two at least of his ladies were in a position to benefit by his repast, he felt that, in justice to them, he ought to eat as much cake as he possibly could. Having brightened their future by devouring my slice as well as his own, he passed a wooden pipe, curiously inlaid with pewter, for me to fill; an office which I undertook with cheerful alacrity, having been grievously apprehensive that he intended me to smoke it myself. After this, Sandilli rose, and followed by a numerous train of counsellors and myrmidons, in red ochre and tiger-skins, commenced a strange sort of 'follow-my-leader' round the dancers, who were still hard at work in front of us. This ceremony—supposed to imitate the movements of various wild animals—was uninteresting at first, owing to the crippled condition of the chief; but on his returning for another pull at the pipe, Dundas took the lead, and began a wild and hideous measure, circling round the leapers with the most ghastly shudderings, grunts, and contortions that can be conceived. Eyes starting, chests heaving, mouths hissing, and assagais quivering—the wildest imagination can picture nothing more horrible; and when a second, and then a third, band formed, and the ground was covered with panting and excited savages, howling, hissing, crouching, and springing, I fairly shut my eyes, and wished I could open them in Old England.

The great event of the day, however, was to come off; and before long, a shouting ring of Caffres had collected the horses of the tribe, and were soon scouring away to assemble the cattle for the great race, which all appeared to look forward to with the greatest excitement. Two hours had elapsed, and I had smoked as many pipes as I could manage, the dance never stopping for a moment, when a sudden stir among the crowd, and all eyes turned towards a distant hill, made me turn also. A long line of horsemen, closely followed by what appeared to be a large pack of enormous foxhounds, was seen streaming over a distant ridge into the valley. As the horsemen came nearer and nearer, and the shrill Caffre whistle, so dreaded by our frontier farmers, sounded shriller and more distinct, the pack resolved itself into a dense drove of maddened oxen rushing in a body towards the kraal. The men rose, hurrying in excited groups to the line of course marked out; while the women, snatching up knobkerries and mimosa-branches, zigzagged about with strange and grotesque gestures, raising piercing quavering cries. On they came, the horsemen dashing by, and the frantic oxen trampling after them, when suddenly a wild shout rose from the concourse, the crowd appeared to melt away, and looking round, I beheld a large white ox charging down upon us, head down, tail up, and every evidence of a determination to do for some one. Following the general example, I turned and fled as those only can do when the course is clear, and a mad bullock is after them. I had a glimpse of Sandilli bolting like a rabbit into the nearest hut; but the hut was full, and the enemy close at hand, so following the flying counsellors, I dodged behind another, and escaped unhurt. Poor B——, conspicuous in a suit of shepherd's plaid, dipped down behind a small mimosa-bush; and the enraged ox, after vainly endeavouring to break into one of the huts, caught sight of his garments, and made at him, rolling over bush and B—— in his mad fury. Out poured the Caffres by hundreds. B—— was picked up, bruised, but not otherwise injured; and the ox having expended all his energies in this last grand effort, relapsed into stupidity, and was driven off ignominiously by a small boy. A good deal of banter ensued on the extreme rapidity with which Sandilli's exit had been made; but he pointed to his lame leg, and with great presence of mind changed the subject, by summoning his merry men to assist in the slaughter of the ox, an event of the last importance in Caffre fêtes. Exult, O dairymaids of Britain, when I announce that there is a country where your calling is held in such esteem that the lords of the land monopolise it to the exclusion of the weaker sex; for, in Caffreland, men alone are allowed to milk the cows, tend the cattle, and when death comes, are considered worthy of sepulture in the cattle-kraal!

In obedience to this custom, the warriors of the tribe surrounded the enclosure; and a victim having been selected, by a dexterous fling of a sort of lasso, it was thrown down, tied by the heels, and an assagai drawn down the stomach, until the bowels protruded through a hole large enough to admit the hand of the operator, who felt for some large artery, which he forcibly pulled in two. He was a clumsy workman; and the sickening spectacle of a man digging up to the elbow in the vitals of a living animal was prolonged for full five minutes; after which we paid a visit to the bride, who was sitting alone in a hut, and guarded from all scrutiny by a ferocious-looking old man, smoking a native pipe of so thoroughly blackguard a character, that feeling sure I should never meet its equal again, I straightway yearned to possess it, and after a brisk bargaining, made it my own for the sum of one shilling.

This sum, however, included a sight of the bride, who was rather pretty, and affected a great deal of nervous shyness until we turned to go, when she became clamorous for azali, and forgot all her airs and graces in her eagerness for the coveted article. Her share in the day's proceedings was not a cheerful one, being limited to confinement in a dark hut, guarded by the old man, whose business it is to prevent any one of the tribe from seeing her until the revels are ended, when her husband comes with much pomp, and carries her off in triumph.

By this time our stock of azali was exhausted; and finding that if we stayed we should be expected to dine off all those portions of the slaughtered beast which are thrown away in other places, but in Caffraria are especially reserved for those guests whom the chief delights to honour, we made our arrangements for departure; and shaking hands with Sandilli, who was engaged in a second bout of 'follow-my-leader,' I received from him his pipe as a souvenir of my visit, and rode off much pleased with all I had seen, reaching home soon after dark. Nearly four years have elapsed since then, and crushed by famine and misery, the Gaikas, as a nation, cease to exist. There is little doubt that at the period of my visit Sandilli was planning a resumption of hostilities; and with the view of forcing the Gaikas, Tambookies, and other sections of the Caffre races resident on our eastern frontier, in famished hordes upon the colony, was plotting a deep-laid scheme which ultimately proved his ruin.

How the native prophets excited the people to destroy their cattle and neglect their lands, promising boundless wealth and the total overthrow of the white man, and how ably Sir George Grey faced the danger, and turned their weapons to their own destruction, is now a matter of history. What has become of Sandilli I know not. Forced by starvation to yield his chieftainship into the hands of one who, had he allowed him, would have proved his best friend, he found a refuge in the colony, and is probably now working for his bread, and learning by bitter experience how hopeless it is to resist the march of the white dominion. That he has not brought himself under the strong hand of the law, appears probable from the following passage in the *Cape Argus* of September 20:

'Nine Caffre chiefs are now undergoing exile on Robber Island: they are the celebrated Macomo, Umhala, Dalimi, Matji, Umpffaga, Seyolo, Stock, Kenti, and Xlo-Xlo.'

IN A FASHIONABLE SEMINARY.

Now that education and educators are occupying so much attention, and that no less a personage than Sir John Coleridge has expressed his opinion of the high standing which ought to be accorded to members of that profession, it may not be uninteresting to general readers to hear an unvarnished tale from one who has had no little experience as a tutor at private establishments, in families, and in public grammar-schools. First of all, it may be necessary to state what manner of man I was who entered upon this honourable (they say), if not lucrative calling, and what were my reasons for doing so. I was from the cradle destined for holy orders; I consequently took the usual course at the university, during my undergraduateship, to qualify myself for that sacred office; but when the time came that I might write myself B.A., I felt myself unfitted for that calling. A certainly unfortunate, perhaps an unreasonable idea, took possession of my mind, to the effect that my training, so far from having peculiarly fitted, had totally unfitted me for becoming the representative of an apostle. There was the bar certainly, but there was no money. I then bethought me of my Latin and Greek: I had taken a very fair degree, though not good enough to entitle me to a fellowship, and I therefore concluded that it would be as well to see what it was worth in the market. I commenced my acquaintance with what I may term educational penal servitude under the private establishment system.

It so happened, that whilst I pondered, my eye fell upon a very promising advertisement, from which it appeared that a Mr Fishey, who was what is denominated in scholastic slang, 'principal of a first-class establishment,' wished to engage the services of a GENTLEMAN to teach the higher classics, and that the aforesaid Mr Fishey was willing to give, as an equivalent for the instruction, rooms, daily bread, and L.160 per annum current money of the realm. The place was in a delightful part of the country, and within fifteen miles of London. The advertisement, it is true, was two or three days old, but at that time I was sanguine, and, moreover, had not then sufficient experience to be aware that a sentence in an advertisement which contains the word 'Gentleman' or 'Christian,' printed in capital letters, must be read by the light of that rule which is laid down by Rory O'More for the interpretation of dreams. I therefore wrote to Mr Fishey such a letter as I thought, from his description of the person he required, would be expected: a very polite answer came, requesting me to call upon him next morning. I called, and saw Mr Fishey. I shall not describe his personal appearance, for I hold that it matters not whether a man be tall or short, stout or thin, handsome or plain; and besides, it would be hardly fair to state of any individual that he had the most evil expression of countenance that you can conceive. 'When I read your note, sir,' he said, 'I burned no less than twenty others which had previously reached me, for—I am so much your senior, that I may be allowed to say so—there was a particularly gentlemanlike tone about it, and I said to myself, this is the man for me; I want, above all things, a gentleman.' It was not long before I ascertained that this was just what he did not want.

However, we came to terms; and in September 184–, I took up my abode at Lacquer House. It was, I must confess, a splendid place: a house fit for a prince, a garden for a philosopher, and a cricket-ground for two All England elevens. Of course, I had made up my mind to rough it; rumours enough had reached me already to prevent my indulging a hope that the life pedagogic would be as free and independent as that of an undergraduate with a pretty comfortable little income (for four years) at a small college which resembled rather a private hotel than an abode of learning; but I must say the first dose I had struck me as rather strong, notwithstanding all the resolution I had summoned. It so happened that I had had a quantity of books packed in a hamper; and when I arrived at Mr Fishey's mansion, I requested the man-servant (for there was a live man-servant in a green coat with brass buttons) to take that, as well as the rest of my things, into my bedroom. Well, when I went up to bed, there was no hamper.

'Thomas,' said I, 'where is that hamper?'

'Mr Fishey don't allow no hampers in the bedrooms, sir.'

'Oh, but that rule applies to the boys, I suppose, not to me.'

'Mr Fishey don't allow nobody to have hampers in their bedrooms, sir.'

'Very well; then I shall go down and speak to Mr Fishey.'

'Wait a minute, sir,' said Thomas, who had been eyeing me with a mixture of suspicion and pity; 'would you mind saying what's in the hamper?'

'What's in the hamper? Why, books, to be sure.'

'Oh, I beg pardon, sir; then I'll fetch it up in a minute.'

'What the—('deuce' I was going to say, only I recollected I was an instructor of youth)—what on earth did you imagine was in it?'

'Well, sir,' said Thomas with some hesitation, 'I thought perhaps some wine, or a little drop of spirits; some of the masters has done so afore now.'

I was struck dumb; and whilst Thomas went down for my hamper, I gave myself up to reflection. Good Heavens! I thought, is it possible that men can be brought to this! Can a gentleman, by being subjected to a long course of moral bullying and social tyranny, be brought to such an abject state that he should, forgetful of his manhood, his education, and his position, be reduced to tricks and artifices for which a boy at a public school would be flogged, and by which a menial would be disgraced? Or is it to be explained on the ground that the education of which men jabber so much, is still so badly paid, that those to whom fond parents intrust the moral, religious, and intellectual training of their sons, are generally men of inferior stamp? At the time, I could not decide: experience has taught me that I might have answered both questions in the affirmative. I jumped into bed, and experienced grievance number two. My bedroom was a nice room enough, with a beautiful view, if not much furniture; but my bed had evidently been intended for somebody about four inches shorter than myself. However, as I never cared much in what position I slept, I overcame this difficulty as well as I could; and thinking the poor principal must have bother enough without being troubled about matters of upholstery, I made up my mind I would bear with equanimity a diagonal posture.

At half-past six, I was awakened by the ubiquitous Thomas; at seven, I descended, and found there was an hour's work to be done before breakfast, at half-past eight, at which time we assembled in a really handsome room, and were arranged after the following fashion: At the further end of the room, at a table running across it, were ranged about ten boys (or gentlemen, as it was Mr Fishey's custom to term them), with Mr Fishey in the centre; and at a table running down the room perpendicular to the former, was a larger table, at which sat the remaining thirty (for it was a very select school—limited to forty), with some of the assistant-masters at the top, others at the bottom, on each side, and Mrs Fishey facing her husband at the distant extremity. I may here mention, once for all, that the education of the stomach at Lacquer House was scrupulously attended to, and would have more than satisfied Miss Martineau, unless she might have taken exception, as I did (simply on my own account), to the hot suppers, to which the seniors—who, by the way, paid L.200 a year—and the masters were almost nightly treated. However, to return to the breakfast. I at this meal made my first grand discovery—namely, that Mr Fishey invariably called everybody, when addressing him (even the masters), 'Sir;' and perhaps as no boy paid less than L.100 a year for his schooling, *they* were in a manner entitled to it; but into this habit I never could fall, either in the case of the boys, or any one else; and as I didn't pay Mr Fishey either L.100 or L.200 a year, but, on the contrary, received salary from him, I took it as somewhat strange in him to treat me in such a manner.

After breakfast, there was leisure until ten, at which hour we commenced work, and continued it until one; for if you wish to have a really select school, one point of great importance is to take care that the hours are as ostentatiously different from those of common schools as ingenuity can make them. We then, after a hasty ablution, dined; we recommenced our studies at four, and went on until five; then came tea, and at six we 'resumed' until eight; after this, the little boys went to roost; at nine, there was supper; and at ten, a gentle hint to go to bed was given by the sudden turning off of the gas with which the place was lighted, and the apparition of certain bedroom candles on a table outside the dining-room door. Indeed, the day—as I could not help observing with a little vexation—was so scientifically cut up, that it was next to impossible for a master to find any time for his own reading. It was not intended, I found by inquiry, that they should; they were to do all their own reading in the holidays. In fact, Mr Fishey was determined to have what is vulgarly termed his ha'porth; and perhaps he was quite right, though to me it seemed a hard Egyptian bondage. In fact, a better school for the class of pupils I cannot imagine: they were generally the sons of men who had amassed immense wealth, and wished their offspring to travel the royal road to learning. Eton, and Harrow, and Winchester were too independent for them; they would there have been brought up in habits of veneration for their elders, and respect for their teachers; in the ways of rough sport and healthy discipline. But at Lacquer House their ease was consulted, their wealth was respected; they were taught to consider their instructors as men of an inferior grade, and instruction as a ware which they could purchase without trouble—as something which was to be imparted to them mysteriously by the labour and toil of those who had the thankless office of teaching them, without any love of knowledge on their own part, and without any respect for the source from which they derived it. Nevertheless, I determined to do my best. I saw at once, after a few trials, that association with my pupils—who were principally the senior boys, or, I beg their pardon, 'gentlemen'—in play-hours was impossible; their purse-proud airs were insufferable. I therefore confined myself to sheer Latin and Greek; and at last the examination, the Christmas holidays, and my first quarter's salary, came. The salary came in the form of a cheque in a note from Mr Fishey. It seemed to me queer enough to receive a note from a man under the same roof with me; however, I acknowledged it in another note, and remarked, at the same time, that, as it was my first essay in school-mastery, an expression of approval or even disapproval of my efforts would have been a welcome addition to the cheque. I received a stately reply, that when the proper time arrived, Mr Fishey would certainly express his opinion; and great was my surprise and pleasure to hear Mr Fishey that evening, in the presence of the whole school, make a speech in which he mentioned, that the examiner had remarked that I had been very successful in many instances, and that the improvement in one gentleman, in particular, who had been considered a hopeless case, was really marvellous, and that he (Mr Fishey) was very much indebted to me. Of course, I felt perfectly recompensed for toil, discomfort, humiliation, and the thousand petty annoyances that I had met with, and spent that Christmas holiday and the proceeds of that cheque with inexpressible satisfaction. I little knew how soon a change would come.

The holidays were ended, and I returned with renewed vigour and determination to swallow bitter pills and do my duty towards my pupils, even if they forgot theirs towards me. The moment I entered my bedroom, what an alteration I found! The floor was comfortably carpeted throughout; my diminutive bed had been replaced by one in which Goliath might have stretched his legs; the furniture had been increased and beautified; and I thought to myself, surely honour is the meed of virtue, and Mr Fishey knows how to bestow. The next morning early, he entered my school-room; I was alone, and before he could speak, I jumped up and shook his hand, saying: 'How very kind of you, Mr Fishey, to pay me so much attention! I see you have refurnished my bedroom, and even changed my bed. I am really much beholden to you'——

Mr Fishey changed colour, and stuttered out: 'I—I—I was not aware, sir, that you were uncomfortable.'

'Oh! pray, don't mention it; my bed was a little too short—that's all. I wouldn't trouble you about so paltry a matter at the time; but now that you have yourself remedied the matter, I cannot but'—— I stopped, for I saw Mr Fishey had again changed colour, and looked remarkably uneasy.

'The fact is, sir,' he said, 'hem—the fact is, sir, I have another—ahem, another pupil coming to me in a day or two, and I was going to ask you whether you would object to give up your room, sir, and—and—in fact, take a bedroom in the village somewhere, sir, hem!'

It was my turn to change colour now; in a moment, all the little slights to which I had before been subjected, and which I had striven to believe were creations of my own morbid imagination, were presented in their true light to my mind. I was but a hireling and a convenience, to be turned out at a moment's notice, to make way for some conceited scion of a successful speculator, and I was unable to speak for passion. Mr Fishey's interpretation of my silence was characteristic. 'Of course, I will pay for the room, sir,' said he.

I swallowed my wrath, and replied: 'As I am to be turned out of your house for the sake of a fresh pupil, I have a proposition to make, which is this—that I should like not only a bedroom but a sitting-room as well in the village; and that, as your hot suppers are not at all to my taste, and simply waste my time, I should leave immediately the work is over, as I really require some time for private study.'

'There can be no objection to that arrangement, sir; but, allow me to say, I shall only feel bound to pay for a bedroom, and I have ascertained that one may be had for seven shillings a week.'

'Pay just what you please, Mr Fishey, or nothing at all; I have only to say that, as I now see clearly the light in which you regard me, I shall for the future be more watchful of my own rights and interests than heretofore.'

We then parted, and were very distant for a day or two, when I found one evening, on reaching my lodgings, a note from Mr Fishey, in which, after a few complimentary remarks, he informed me it had struck him that should anything occur to cause his absence from the school, I, as next in rank, should be obliged to take his place; that my youthful age scarcely fitted me for such a post; and that, therefore, as a quarter's notice had been agreed upon between us, I might choose whether I would leave his establishment at the ensuing Easter, or remain another quarter: he also assured me that he greatly regretted the necessity to which he felt himself reduced.

I sent him an answer, in which I remarked that it was strange, inasmuch as he saw me daily, that he should write, rather than adopt the more friendly and more natural course of a personal interview. The consequence was, that we had a personal interview in his study—not alone, however, for it was his custom always to have present at any conversation with any one of his assistants, a Mr Dunning, an old school-fellow of his, and his factotum in the internal economy of the school. This, I thought, shewed a most unpleasant suspiciousness, and I considered it almost insulting; however, he was very gracious, insisted upon it that he was very sorry to lose me, declared I was deserving of something much higher—some place, I suppose, he meant, where I shouldn't be turned out of doors to sleep—and gave me three days to decide upon my time of departure. I had a misgiving all the time that he had discovered I was not sufficiently broken in or down for his purposes, and so wished to get rid of me as soon as possible; but my funds were low; and upon the third day I said, as I was leaving the breakfast-table, in a cheerful, friendly way: 'By the by, Mr Fishey, I have determined to stay with you until the end of the next quarter.'

At once my misgiving was justified; he turned pale with rage, and roared out: 'Then I do hope, sir, that you will pay more attention to your duties.'

I stared, and reminded him of his complimentary speech at Christmas. This rather staggered him, and he answered: 'Yes, sir, certainly I did say something of that kind; but since then, two of the gentlemen who read with you have complained to me that you don't take interest in them.'

'Indeed!' said I; 'may I ask who they are?'

'Wilcox and Poynder, sir.'

'Will you be kind enough to mention any particular case of want of interest on my part?'

'Wilcox told me, sir, that you said when he translated a certain passage of Virgil, that "he could do it so, if he liked."'

'He should have told you also what I said would be the consequence of his doing so—namely, that he would be plucked at Oxford if he did. The fact was simply, that he persisted in translating it in a certain manner, which he assured me was the manner adopted by his former tutor. I explained to him the right way; and as he is about nineteen years of age, I don't well see how I could do more than point out to him the advantages and disadvantages of the respective renderings, leaving the choice to his own sense.'

'Then Poynder, sir, says you set him against his work: that he asked you whether the succeeding books of Livy which he had to read were as difficult as that which he was reading, and that you answered shortly, "Yes, and harder."'

'I certainly said something to that effect. His ignorance of the book we were reading was heart-rending; and I undoubtedly asked him how he expected to manage the other books, if he failed in this. He asked: "Are they harder?" and I answered: "Yes." And so they are. If that is setting a boy or "gentleman" against his work, I plead guilty; but part of my duty is surely to speak the truth, and most people would have considered what I said as a spur to exertion.'

So we went our way; and I felt that there was feud betwixt us, and that he would make me aware of it. The crisis which I foreboded soon arrived. One Sunday, at dinner, I, having a very bad sore throat, found it impossible to eat my roast-beef, and, unwilling to draw attention to my ailments, requested Thomas to remove my plate. Quite unconscious that I had attracted any one's notice, I waited patiently until the next course came. In front of Mr Fishey was placed a bread-pudding; that, thought I, is good for a sore throat; but Mr Fishey, who generally asked me first what I would take, to my astonishment passed me by. One of the servants came to my relief, and begged to know what I would like. Turning round, and looking steadily at Mr Fishey, I answered: 'I will trouble Mr Fishey for a little bread-pudding.'

'Ask him to help himself,' said he, brutally; 'take him the dish!'

All the blood rushed into my face as I stood up; and had the servant obeyed the order, Mr Fishey would have had more bread-pudding at one time than he ever had before, with the addition of a dish to help his digestion. As it was, the servant stood still, and I immediately left the room, and indited a note telling Mr Fishey that, after his very uncourteous conduct, of course I should not take another meal in his house; and that, as it was Sunday, perhaps he would prefer talking over matters with me the next day. He sent a message to the effect, that he would prefer that moment in his study. Thither I went, and found the everlasting Dunning as usual in attendance, to be a witness, I suppose, in case of need hereafter. I demanded an explanation of Mr Fishey's conduct; he declared that I set the 'gentlemen' a bad example by refusing what was set before me. I replied that he ought to know what sort of table he kept—if bad, it served him right if his viands were refused; if good—and nothing, certainly, could be better—he ought to have taken for granted that I had a reason. At last, after a long altercation, he declining to apologise, I left the room, with the understanding that I would continue to do the work of the school until the end of the passing quarter; but that I would take no more meals under his roof, and would leave at the earliest opportunity; and that, moreover, I should expect an apology. From that period there was almost a daily squabble. He made an effort to treat me as though nothing had occurred; I declined to be so treated until he had apologised. He then assumed the offensive, and accused me of having worn an expression of contempt upon my face ever since I had been in Lacquer House. I replied that it might very well be as he said, but that, nevertheless, I was unconscious of it. He further brought against me a charge of opening the window and whistling, or putting my legs upon the chimney-piece, and reading a book with my back to any company whom he brought to see my school-room. I asked him whether I had done so on the first occasion of such a visit, to which he was compelled to answer that, on the contrary, I had shewn the greatest politeness. I then pointed out to him that there was a limit to everything; that my politeness had been unacknowledged by either himself or his company, who had stared at me as if I were a zoological specimen, and that I had adopted the other course of behaviour in self-defence; that if he would bring people to visit a wild beast in a den, the least I could do for them was to realise as much as was in my power their flattering expectations. He then assured me that the 'young gentlemen' had no respect for me; to which I answered that, considering the position in which he placed me, I should be very much astonished if they had, seeing that I had no cocked-hat or staff, or any outward paraphernalia, without which even parish-beadles are as nothing in the eyes of charity-boys. Thus I dragged on a miserable existence for the last few weeks of my sojourning at Lacquer House—Mr Fishey insulting me in the morning; and I marching up and down the hall, after school was over, in walking-costume, waiting to intercept Mr Fishey as he went into prayers, to demand an explanation, and to assure him that if he did not alter his conduct, I would leave him at a moment's notice, and that he might get whom he could to take my place. I can scarcely help laughing now as I picture to myself Mr Fishey's head anxiously peering out of his study-door, to see if I am gone in the evening of a day upon which he has been more than usually obnoxious; and the air of desperation with which he at last issues forth, when he sees there is no chance of my taking my departure without 'a few words in my room.' I believe that man at last considered me his Nemesis; he certainly told me I was 'very stubborn and unforgiving.' I replied mildly, that he had insulted me, and must apologise; and I will acknowledge that, when I really left, he—perhaps out of a feeling of joy at the riddance—did apologise most handsomely.

Such is a slight sketch of my first, and, I humbly hope, last attempt to fulfil the duties of classical assistant in a Fashionable Seminary. I would fain hope that it may have the effect of preventing at least one sensitive man from trusting too much to a well-looking advertisement, and at least one 'principal' from representing himself to be in search of exactly that kind of individual whom he does not want.

EPIDEMICS OF THE MIDDLE AGES.[*]

In spite of what we hear and read, and even smell with our own noses, of the state of the Thames and the impurities of London, and notwithstanding the threats of Cholera, and of the ravages of that dread disease when it does appear, there is no doubt that we moderns can have but feeble conceptions of the nature of a Plague proper—of the hideous aspects of the great Epidemics of old. We are dirty enough in some of our great towns, it is true, but we are not so altogether filthy as were our forefathers of the middle ages. We overeat ourselves occasionally in the City, still, but two lord mayors and six aldermen are not found to die in one week of the *swetynge sykenesse*, as happened during the festivities which followed upon the victory of Bosworth Field. We by no means understand the nature of all diseases yet, or can suggest the most effectual remedies, but we do not entertain such delusions, in any cases, as that *a man must be made to perspire for twenty-four hours without intermission*, if he would escape death. The wisdom of our ancestors put the patient suspected of the Sweating Sickness instantly to bed; 'covered him with feather-beds and furs; and whilst the stove was heated to the utmost, closed the doors and windows with the greatest care, to prevent all access of cool air. In order, moreover, to prevent the sufferer, should he be somewhat impatient, from throwing off his hot load, some persons in health likewise lay upon him, and thus oppressed him to such a degree that he could neither stir hand nor foot; and, finally, in this rehearsal of hell, being tortured in an agonising sweat, gave up the ghost, when, perhaps, if his too officious relatives had manifested a little discretion, he might have been saved without difficulty.'

To continue that pleasant task, the favourable comparison of ourselves with our ancestors, if ever that terrible scourge of the fourteenth century, the Black Death, should reappear, it is probable that we should have more than one Guy de Chauliac to vindicate the honour of his profession, and 'disdain the excuse of his colleagues, who held the Arabian notion that medical aid was unavailing, and that the contagion justified flight;' nor would many of our clergy be found to conduct themselves like those of that period, who left the host outside the sick man's house, to be taken in by a servant, or administered the final sacrament at the end of a pole.

That this hideous pest, which derived its northern name[†] from the black spots, indicative of a putrid decomposition, which appeared upon the skin, was exceedingly contagious, there seems to be no doubt. It was communicated from the sick to the sound 'like fire among dry and oily fuel,' and not only men but animals at once perished if they so much as touched anything belonging to the dead. Boccaccio, himself a medical man, relates that he saw two hogs upon the rags of a person who had died of this plague, after staggering for a short time, fall down dead as if they had taken poison. Every spot which the sick had touched spread the contagion, and even the very eyes of the patient were considered dangerous, which 'had the power of acting at a distance, whether on account of their unwonted lustre, or the distortion which they always suffer in plague, or whether in conformity with an ancient notion, according to which the sight was considered as the bearer of a demoniacal enchantment.' More powerful, indeed, than any atmospheric or other cause of the Black Death, was the effect of the contagion communicated from one people to another over the great roads and in the Mediterranean harbours. From its head-quarters in China, the invading pestilence travelled by caravan and ship into Europe; Constantinople and the harbours of Asia Minor being the *foci* whence it radiated to the most distant seaports and islands. Cyprus lost almost all its inhabitants, and 'ships without crews were often seen in the Mediterranean, as afterwards in the North Sea, driving about and spreading the plague wherever they went on shore.' Lübeck, at that period a town of immense importance, was thrown by it into such consternation, that the citizens destroyed themselves as if in frenzy. 'Merchants, whose earnings and possessions were unbounded, coldly and willingly renounced their earthly goods. They carried their treasures to monasteries and churches, and laid them at the foot of the altar; but gold had no charms for the monks, for it brought them death. They shut their gates, yet still it was cast to them over the convent wall. People would brook no impediment to the last pious work to which they were driven by despair. When the plague ceased, men thought they were still wandering among the dead, so appalling was the livid aspect of the survivors, in consequence of the anxiety they had undergone during its continuance.'

In Paris, there died five hundred daily in the Hôtel-Dieu; nor had the Black Death respect for even the blood-royal, for the queens of Navarre and France fell each a victim to it. Venice and London lost each a hundred thousand of their population, and Munich fifty thousand, which must have been almost its all. 'Of the estimates of lives lost in Europe,' says Professor Hecker, 'the most probable is that, altogether, a fourth part of the inhabitants were carried off. It may be assumed, therefore, without exaggeration, that Europe lost during the Black Death *twenty-five millions* of people.' It may well be asked, then, how did she recover so quickly from a shock so tremendous as this? The professor—acknowledged on all hands to be the most learned medical historian in Germany—has an explanation to give sufficiently wonderful. 'After the cessation of the Black Plague, a greater fecundity in women was everywhere remarkable—a grand phenomenon, which, from its occurrence after every destructive pestilence, proves to conviction, if any occurrence can do so, the prevalence of a Higher Power in the direction of general organic life. Marriages were almost without exception prolific, and double and treble births more frequent than at other times.'

There were two grand devices favoured by the non-medical portion of the European community for the doing away with the Black Death. One was the joining the Society of Flagellants, who, noble and ignoble, old and young, marched through the streets with nothing save a scarf around their waists, and a scourge of leathern thongs in their hands. 'Not only during the day, but even by night, and in the severest winter, they traversed the cities with burning torches, and banners, in thousands and tens of thousands, headed by their priests, and prostrated themselves before the altars. They proceeded in the same manner in the villages; and the woods and mountains resounded with the voices of those whose cries were raised to God. The melancholy chant of the penitent alone was heard.' The second great remedy was far more popular, since no Christian body suffered by it—namely, the universal burning of Jews, and the advice of the clergy was in this matter followed with much greater alacrity. We can imagine the delight of a good Catholic, to whom, expecting a cat-o'-nine tails for himself, it was suggested, instead, to sacrifice some other person, to whom, perhaps, he may also have owed money; and we can believe in the tenor of the remark which Barham puts into the mouth of the king of Spain upon a like occasion, if not in the very words themselves:

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[*] *The Epidemics of the Middle Ages.* From the German of J. F. C. Hecker, M.D. Translated by B. C. Babington, M.D. Trubner & Co. 1859.

[†] In Italy, it was called 'The Great Mortality.'

Pooh, pooh,
  Burn a Jew?
Burn a dozen—
  Burn *two*.

And, indeed, it seemed better to burn a hundred Jews, than to give as many smacks with a leathern whip on one's own naked shoulders. In every destructive pestilence, the common people have at first attributed the mortality to poison; and in this, the Jews were at once accused of having poisoned the wells, and infected the air. In Germany, the springs and wells were built over, so that nobody might drink of them, and the inhabitants of numerous towns used only river and rain water. The gates of cities were guarded, and if any stranger arrived with drugs in his possession—any *vade mecum* of a medicine-chest, such as most travellers would be likely to have about them—he was made to swallow a portion of them in presence of the authorities. All the Jews in Basel were enclosed in a wooden building constructed expressly for that purpose, and burned together with it, upon the mere outcry of the people, without form of trial. At Strasburg, two thousand Jews were burned in their own burial-ground; and at Mayence, twelve thousand. At Spiers and Eslingen, the whole Jewish community anticipated these attentions, and burned themselves in their synagogues. In short, 'whatever deeds fanaticism, avarice, and despair, in fearful combination, could instigate mankind to perform, were executed in 1349 throughout Germany, Italy, and France, with impunity, and in the eyes of the world.' Yet, singularly enough, it is about that date, we believe, at which, by very many simple persons, are fixed 'the good old times.' Even the physicians of the period appear to have had rather peculiar views of the cure and cause of this formidable malady, since we find the medical faculty of Paris, officially commissioned to deliver their opinion upon the matter, recommending 'a little fine treacle to be taken after dinner,' and that 'fat people should by no means sit in the sunshine.'

Scarcely had the graves of the millions who had perished by the Black Death well closed, before the Dancing Mania broke out in Germany and the Netherlands. This was not confined to any particular locality, but was propagated like some demoniacal epidemic by the mere spectacle of the sufferers. Persons afflicted with this dance of St John, as it was called, 'appeared with garlands in their hair, and their waists girt with cloths, that they might, as soon as the paroxysm was over, receive immediate relief on the attack of the tympany. This bandage was, on the insertion of a stick, easily twisted tight; many, however, obtained more relief from kicks and blows, which they found numbers of persons ready to administer. . . . These possessed persons intimidated the people to such a degree, that there was an express ordinance issued that no one should make any but square-toed shoes, because these fanatics had manifested a morbid dislike to the pointed shoes which had of late come into fashion.' Thus these morbid disciples of Terpsichore retained in their madness—as is generally found among this species of fanatics—a very considerable sense of what would hurt them: they could bear a little kicking, but then it must be with square-toed shoes. Why they should become so furious at the sight of red, as to fly at any person wearing garments of that colour, and to tear them, is less intelligible; but there was another official prohibition, in consequence, forbidding red costumes to be worn. The dancers, it is fair to add, tore their own clothes as well as other people's in their paroxysms, and indeed were liable to so greatly misbehave themselves, that those who could afford it employed confidential attendants to accompany and take decent care of them. It was found that music had particular charms for these poor creatures, and on this account the magistrates hired musicians to carry them through their attacks with the greater quickness; and powerful men were sent in amongst them to complete their exhaustion, since they were exceedingly emulous of high leaps. With the Tarentula dancers—which was the name this mania went by in Italy, from the little spider, which was supposed to be the cause of it all—red was, on the contrary, the most favourite colour, so that a patient was seldom without some article of that hue, which he feasted his eyes upon, and ogled as a lover does his mistress.

'The dancing fits of a certain Capuchin friar in Tarentum excited so much curiosity, that Cardinal Cajetano proceeded to the monastery to see with his own eyes what was going on. As soon as the monk, who was in the middle of his dance, perceived the spiritual prince clothed in his red garments, he no longer listened to the Tarentella of the musicians, but, with strange gestures, endeavoured to approach the cardinal, as if he wished to count the very threads of his scarlet robe, and to allay his intense longing by its odour.' Upon the spectators preventing this, he presently sunk down in a swoon, and was only recovered by the cardinal's compassionately giving him his cape. 'This he immediately seized in the greatest ecstasy, and pressed, now to his breast, now to his forehead and cheeks, and then again commenced his dance, as if in the frenzy of a love-fit.' The historian does not state whether the cardinal got his cape back again or not.

The extent to which morbid sympathy will carry ignorant and simple persons, can be scarcely comprehended indeed by those who have not read this volume of Dr Hecker's. It was originally printed in this country for the Sydenham Society, when the ravages of the Cholera were fresh in all men's minds, and mainly on account of its description of the Black Death; but it is not less interesting at this period to compare the accounts of the Dancing Mania with what we now read in every newspaper of the modern Revivals. These last, it seems, are by no means, however, any novelty, except so far as regards the extent of the hallucination. Within the present century, a Revival movement commenced at a Methodist chapel at Redruth in Cornwall, in every respect similar to the present one, and affected, even to convulsions, more than four thousand persons. About fifty years ago, there was scarcely a Sabbath wherein the same religious hysteria did not manifest itself in the Shetland Isles. One pious and intelligent minister, however, being annoyed on his first introduction to that country by persons with these paroxysms, informed his congregation that no remedy was so excellent as immersion in cold water, for which treatment a lake at his kirk-door happened to offer particular advantages. This suggestion put an effectual stop to these unpleasant manifestations, although several females writhed and tossed their arms about in the churchyard outside, when not under the eye of their pastor. Before, however, this hydropathical clergyman arrived, as many as sixty persons were, on sacramental occasions, carried out of kirk together, struggling and roaring. John Wesley, it may be remembered, was perfectly used to exhibitions of this kind, and by no means approved of them, even in the gentler sex. 'I shan't think any better of you for *that*,' observed he to one of these female Convulsionists; 'whereupon,' we are told, 'she mended.' Whenever a man 'fell into a fit for my entertainment,' says he, 'I had him placed outside to recover at his leisure.'

The religious element is not, of course, essential to the exhibition of this morbid sympathy.

'At a cotton manufactory at Hodden Bridge, in Lancashire, a girl, on the 15th February 1787, put a mouse into the bosom of another girl who had a great dread of mice. The girl was immediately thrown into a fit, and continued in it, with the most violent convulsions, for twenty-four hours. On the following day, three more girls were seized in the same manner; and on the 17th, six more. The whole work, in which 200 or 300 were engaged, was presently stopped, and an idea prevailed that a particular disease had been introduced by a bag of cotton opened in the house. 'Presently, twenty-four were seized, of whom twenty-one were young women, two girls of about ten, and one man who had been much fatigued with holding the girls. Five of the number lived miles away at another factory, and *were infected entirely from report*, not having seen the other patients, but, like them and the rest of the country, strongly impressed with the idea of the plague being caught from the cotton. The symptoms were anxiety, strangulation, and very strong convulsions; and these were so violent as to last without any intermission from a quarter of an hour to twenty-four hours, and to require four or five persons to prevent the patients from tearing their hair and dashing their heads against the floor or walls.'

The novelty in this present edition of Dr Hecker's book—now for the first time procurable by the general reader—is his account of the wonderful child-pilgrimages at the beginning of the thirteenth century. A shepherd-boy in Vendôme began the principal movement—of which there were several at different epochs—and soon gathered to himself some thirty thousand young followers. He performed miracles at St Denis, and was the greatest (and least) saint of his day for no little time; but 'every day there arose new eight or ten year old prophets, who preached, worked miracles, and animated whole armies of children. When any asked these children in pilgrims' coats whither they were going, they answered as with one mouth, "To God." Their orderly processions were headed by oriflammes; many carried wax-candles, crosses, and censers; and they sung incessantly hymns of fervid devotion. . . . . The consternation of the parents was boundless. No persuasion, nor even the despair and tears of the mothers, could keep back the boys. Were they hindered, they wept night and day, pined with sorrow, and fell ill with trembling of limbs, so at last, of necessity, they were let go. . . . . The movement did not last long before there were assembled at Vendôme an innumerable army of boys, armed and unarmed, many on horseback, the most on foot, and among them not a few girls in male clothing.' They imagined, poor little fellows, that the sea would go back for them, and that they should reach the Holy Land dry shod. They were, of course, soon joined by a host of roguish camp-followers, who cheated them so miserably that the most had soon to be maintained by charity. But at Marseille, whither they were bound, the worst awaited them. Two merchants of that place, Hugh Ferreus and William Porcus, gave them an affectionate reception, and promised to take them over the sea for God's blessing only; but having filled seven large ships with them—two of which struck on St Peter's Island, where a church was erected to the memory of the little passengers, who perished there every one—they carried them to Alexandria, and sold them to the Saracens. It is good to know that Ferreus and Porcus, by command of the Emperor Frederic II., were both hung.

We cannot say that the author of this interesting volume has quite proved, to our satisfaction, his favourite theory, that mighty revolutions in the organism of the earth precede and partly effect such awful scourges as the Black Death and the Sweating Sickness; and he maintains upon, as it seems to us, insufficient grounds, that great epidemics are *epochs of development*, wherein the mental energies of mankind are exerted in every direction, and have a vast influence upon succeeding ages; but surely his complaint is a just one, that such important facts as he has narrated have been left almost entirely to the medical writers, and have been altogether overlooked or dismissed with very insufficient notice by historians.

MY GODMOTHER'S STORY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

When September came round again, the month so sorrowfully marked in my poor friend's calendar, I was very glad that circumstances concurred to remove us from the neighbourhood where the terrible event had happened. Some friends of mine had recently settled in Eldersley, and pressed me to take a lodging near them for a time. Margaret was always accommodating and anxious to promote the pleasures of others, and indeed, in this instance, there was everything to recommend the place to her own feelings—Captain Cameron being quartered in the town, and the wedding-outfit being more easily procured there; for it was now a settled thing that the marriage should take place in the middle of October. Margaret had wished it to be delayed for another year; but her lover's regiment was under orders for Canada, and her dread of a separation from him came to the aid of his own earnest entreaties. She had been most cordially received by his family; had paid a long visit, in the course of the summer, to his Highland home; and was to meet one of his young sisters in Eldersley. Margaret's health and spirits were now recruited, and her past grief and present happiness alike exercised a softening influence over character and manner, which marvellously increased her beauty. Her father, her ponies, her garden, and her music, seemed to have sufficed her till she saw Henry Cameron. Then her heart woke to fuller life, and concentrated itself upon him. I have already said that he was well calculated to win a young girl's affections; yet thoroughly liking him as I did, the more I saw of him, the more I vaguely felt he was not exactly the man I would, if I might, have chosen for her. It was impossible to imagine Margaret leaning upon him for strength and guidance. Loving him as she did, she would probably never find out her own superiority; but I plainly foresaw, that in any difficulty or perplexity, should such occur, it would be the part of *her* clearer intellect and firmer will to unravel or to decide. But I need hardly say I never hinted at this to her; had I done so, it would have been a death-blow to our friendship, for she firmly believed her Henry a very hero for greatness of character, and her spirit delighted to bow down before him, as before a being in all points nobler, wiser, stronger than herself.

Biddy was less tolerant of her young mistress's illusion—not that she ever ventured to breathe the real sentiments of her heart in her presence, for fondly attached as the faithful creature was, there was about Miss Moore a certain unconscious loftiness of manner which a little awed the Irish temperament; but of me she stood in no awe whatever, and I often heard her mutter her sincere belief that 'the divil was in it all, surely; the weddin'-dress ordered before the crape was brown, and the young mistress so taken up with the captain, before the wild waves were tired of tossing the master to and fro out there in the salt sea.' Indeed, Biddy was always thinking of her master now, partly through contrariety and a general preference for lugubrious subjects, not uncommon among her class—partly, too, because of a vision she had had. When we moved to Eldersley, I had left her behind me for a fortnight; and as she was passing by the Acton gate, on the top of the coach, early in the morning, on her way to join us, she had, she protested to me, seen a countryman prowling about, who 'favoured' Mr Moore most strangely, and who, she more than suspected, was no living flesh-and-blood countryman, for all his homely dress, but her master's ghost. Of course I attached very little importance to poor Biddy's vision, and there was no need to caution her not to say a word on such a subject to Miss Moore. So the tale had gone out of my head altogether, when, about a week after her arrival in Eldersley, she came to me the first thing in the morning with the same look of horror I remembered so well that fatal day a year ago, declaring, so sure as she was a sinful woman, that she had seen the master's ghost again! I really was out of patience with her at first; but there was a solemnity about her manner which I could not meet with ridicule, and I thought it better to treat the subject gravely, and try to dispel rather than to silence her evident terror.

It seemed that the evening before, when the carriage came to the door to take Margaret, Captain Cameron, and me, to spend a few hours with my friends, Biddy had stolen out into the area, 'jist,' she said, 'to see the tail of the young mistress's dress, and her small, little feet, as she got into the carriage.' We were less punctual than usual, so that she had to wait, and was looking about her, when her attention was arrested by the very same countryman she had seen before near the Acton gate. He was standing at some little distance from the house, with the light from the lamp-post falling full on his face, and his eyes steadily fixed upon the door. He had a large beard, she said, and his hair was long and gray; but, so sure as she lived to tell it me, it was her lost master! While she stood there, benumbed with horror, the door had opened, and Margaret had come out, leaning on her lover's arm, and, with a merry little laugh at some remark of his, had jumped into the carriage. The man by the lamp-post gave a slight start forward, and, shading his face with his hand, watched the carriage roll away. When it was out of sight, he walked once or twice up and down before the house, looking up at the lighted windows, and then disappeared. I tried to convince Biddy that she had been deceived by some singular likeness; that her quick Irish imagination, dwelling of late so much upon her master's image, had conjured it up in the gloomy indistinctness of the October twilight. But she was in no way to be shaken.

'Do you think that I, who lived fifteen years in the master's service, would not know his ghost? I saw his sad eyes and his illigant white hands, and I'd swear to thim among a thousand. It's the love in his heart for his young daughter as has brought him back to look on her. Oh, ma'am dear, but it's awful to think of, and niver so much as a mass said to quiet his poor restless sowl! Sure and I'll spake to Father Carroll, whin we git back; for all the master was a Protestant, may be there'll be power to help him. I'll pay my wages down in masses.'

'Biddy,' I said, 'I implore you never to breathe to mortal ear what you have seen—what you think you have seen, for I will not believe yet but what you are mistaken. Biddy, I know you love your young mistress; I know I can trust you: if you are right—but God grant you be not right—it is no ghost, it is the wretched man himself, and there—there will be ruin and misery indeed.' And I tried to make her understand the felony of which his reappearance would prove her master guilty, and the destitution to which Margaret would be reduced by its exposure. This last clause made a deep impression, and I saw plainly that the secret was safe. But as to the fraud against the insurance company, Biddy's native district had passed into the hands of some institution of that nature, and a hard, inexorable landlord it made; so, 'Drat them insurances—serve them right!' was the conclusion come to on that head by the honest creature, who would not herself have stolen a pin.

Evidently, indeed, her mind was relieved of its horror; but, oh, what a weight she left upon mine! Could it indeed be so? I recalled the circumstances: the body never found, the desperate embarrassment, the heavy policy; I recalled the strange obstinate habit of bathing, the agonised farewell implied in that last night's embrace to his daughter, the absolute ruin which his death at that juncture averted. There was, indeed, a frightful possibility that Biddy might be right: if so, what would be my duty in the case? If silent, I lent myself to a fraud—I was a party to deceiving Margaret; I left her standing on the brink of a precipice. Yet I myself had not seen Mr Moore; surely I had no right, acting upon the report of an ignorant and fanciful Irishwoman, to agitate his daughter's mind at this crisis of her life. Again, was it my part to watch this unhappy man, who had been a kind friend to me; to denounce him, to expose him to punishment, to ruin his daughter's prospects? Surely not. I must endure—so it seemed to me—endure in silence the horrible suspense; my best comfort the certainty that the unhappy father—if, indeed, it were he—would not again run the risk of discovery. He had seen his child, seen her bright and happy, and on her lover's arm: he knew the success of the desperate game he had played; this would suffice him; he would return to the obscure scene of his own dishonourable existence, wherever it was, and would never be seen, never be heard of more. Biddy was safe as the grave; this mystery, whether fact or fancy, would burden no heart but hers and mine. But the whole of that day passed over me in terror. It rained heavily, and Margaret did not go out; that was a relief. But she never approached the window without my heart being in my mouth. I longed to get out of Eldersley; but what reason could I assign for a move before the time fixed upon? Margaret's quick eye soon discovered my depression and anxiety, and redoubled her tender affection. I feigned severe headache, and kept her as much as possible with me in my own room, which did not look upon the street. But day after day passed, and I began to hope the danger was over. The *trousseau* was prepared, the presents pouring in; we were to leave on the morrow.

How well, through all these years, I can remember that last day! Isobel Cameron—a merry school-girl—had come to spend it with her future sister, and the two were busy discussing some details of bridal-costume in Margaret's room, which opened out of the drawing-room in which I sat. The door was thrown wide open. I could hear their merry laughter—every word they said, and watch their light figures moving to and fro. A selection of wedding-wreaths had been sent from the milliner's, and Isobel insisted upon trying the prettiest on with the bridal-veil, and bringing Margaret in to shew her to me. I shall never forget her in her strange attire as she stood there in the doorway. The deep mourning-dress, which she had never laid aside, clung closely to her tall rounded figure; the bridal-wreath was hardly whiter than the broad smooth forehead; the lace veil hung round in soft heavy folds; her eyes were cast down, her little hands meekly crossed over her breast—she seemed half-ashamed of her own beauty. The tears ran down my face as I looked at her, but Isobel laughed highly at the 'fair victim,' as she called her—then putting her arm round her waist, ran on:

'But, after all, we need not pity her, Mrs Malcolm. Though she looks so quiet, I believe she is very happy at the bottom of her heart.'

Margaret suddenly looked up. 'Happy!' she exclaimed—'oh, too happy, I sometimes fear!'

The warm colour rushed into her cheek—her eyes shone, her whole form seemed to dilate, as for a moment she stood there, preternaturally beautiful, with the glory round her of her great happiness. Meanwhile, Isobel's quick eye had glanced out of the window of the next room: 'Oh, do look, do—there is that odd-looking man again! I noticed him as I came in, and there he is still staring up at these rooms. Look, Margaret,' and she dragged her to the window. I rose—I would have stopped her, would have spoken, if I could. The next moment, I heard Isobel exclaim:

'Why, Margaret, you are ill—you are fainting!' and I rushed forward just in time to receive the sinking form into my arms.

'The excitement has been too much for her,' I said. 'I beg, dear Miss Cameron, that you will leave her alone with me. I know her constitution; I have seen her suffer in the same way before.'

I had great difficulty in persuading the young girl to go away. My poor Margaret! This time she had fainted away indeed. I took the wreath and veil from the death-like head; I darkened the room; I waited till consciousness should return. Not once did I glance out of the window to see whether the wretched cause of all this was there still; I would not be a witness against him. Margaret's fate should be in her own hands only. She came very slowly to herself, then opening her eyes, looked round her in horror.

'Hush, my darling,' I said. 'You have been over-excited; you must not speak just now.' She passed her hand over her forehead—her mind seemed confused. I told her she must lie down and rest, and be quite quiet and undisturbed.

'Henry,' she whispered—'I must see Henry.'

'Yes, darling, you shall. You know he will be here this evening as usual—you will be better then.'

'I cannot wait,' she said piteously. 'I must see him now—now. You must send for him at once.'

'Margaret, give yourself time to recover your calm, your presence of mind.'

'No, no—send for Henry at once—I must see him now.'

There was no help for it, then. I wrote a short note to Captain Cameron; told him that Margaret was far from well, and urgently wished to see him. Before half an hour was over he came in, flushed and anxious.

'What had happened? What was the matter? Was she ill?'

I could tell him nothing—could give him no comfort; I could only summon Margaret, and leave them together.

Their interview seemed to me endlessly long; but it was not an hour by the little clock that ticked on evenly in the room where I waited before I heard Captain Cameron rush down stairs and out of the house. Soon after, I went and joined my poor friend. Oh, the change a few such hours make! I should hardly have known her: all colour faded from the cheek, all light from the eye—the very gloss from the rich hair was gone. Her features were set and rigid. I found her in her own room putting up veil and wreaths. As I entered, she said in a voice the calmness of which pained me more than wildest sobs could have done: 'These must all be returned; they will not be wanted. My marriage with Captain Cameron is broken off. Do not question me. You will come with me at once to the insurance office, will you not? My father is not dead!'

'Oh, Margaret,' I pleaded, 'not to-day—it is too late. Oh, give yourself a little time.'

'To-day—this moment, while I have strength.'

Her manner awed me; I could not refuse her. We went through the dreary bustle of the streets to the heart of the city, not speaking one word, but her hand from time to time convulsively grasping mine. What was there that I could have said to her? She was braver, firmer, better altogether than I. *She* had never for a moment doubted where her duty lay. When we reached the office, it was about to close, but upon inquiry, we found the manager was still there, engaged in conversation with one of the directors, to whom both Margaret and I were well known—a fatherly benevolent man, whose presence was some slight comfort to me even then. He started at the sight of her face, and expressed his fear that she was ill. Waiving the inquiry, she proceeded to state, still with the same preternatural calm, that she had reason to believe herself not entitled to the sum of L.20,000 realised by the policy on her father's life, and that she wished to take immediate measures for transferring it into the hands of the company; adding, that in the event of their sustaining no loss, she presumed no measures would be taken against the one who had been so unhappy as to perpetrate a fraud.

The astonishment her words and manner excited was of course unbounded. But for the corroboration of my presence and my grief, I do believe they would have thought her insane. The director seemed to feel most deeply for her, and nothing could be kinder than his conduct. It was arranged that the lawyer who had drawn up her marriage-settlement should call at the office the following day, and that immediate measures should be taken for liquidating the whole claim that the company might have upon Mr Moore. When this was over, we drove back, still silently. On reaching our house, I ventured to implore her to take some refreshment, some rest.

'Not yet,' was her reply. 'I must watch for my father.'

I then told her that another besides herself had seen him, and suggested that she should write a note, and trust it to Biddy, who would keep most faithful watch, and could give it unobserved into Mr Moore's hands, without causing him so great a shock as her sudden appearance would do. 'But, Margaret,' I said, 'Mr Moore may not return—may never return. This morning, when you saw him, he must have seen you start as you recognised him. You forget that his dearest wish is frustrated by his re-appearance. Some longing to look upon you has brought him back again and again; but now is it likely that he will run any further risk of discovery?'

'He will return,' she said. 'He saw me grow pale, and fall back—he will be uneasy about me.'

We rang for Biddy. I had had no time to prepare her, but I could trust the tact of her affectionate nature. Meanwhile, Miss Moore had written her little note, and gave it me to read. It was only a few words: 'Come back, dear papa, to your Maggie. All is known, but all is safe, and all is settled. I will work for you, and love you. I have no one else to live for now.'

Biddy came in very grave, for she guessed how matters stood, and curtsied to the young mistress.

'Biddy,' she said, 'my dear father is alive; I have seen him, and so have you. Will you watch for him, and give him this?'

'Sure, miss, and I will watch well; and whin it gits dark, I'll slip out of the house, and walk up and down through the night. I'm thinkin' the master will may be not come agin till 'tis late.'

Margaret reached out her hand. 'He was good and kind always, Biddy, till trouble came, and then he did not rightly know what he said or did. He suffered very much; you must only remember that.'

'Why, thin, miss, dear, what else should I rimimber? Sure, and it's He only who made us as knows the love that was in the master's heart for you, from first to last. And may our Lady of Sorrows herself look on ye night and day, for yours is the noble nature intirely, and the tinder, too.' And for a moment Biddy's tears fell fast on the little marble hand, and then she stole away.

Long and anxious was Biddy's watch that night and the next; but she never saw Mr Moore. I felt persuaded that he had sailed to some foreign land; and would willingly have prevailed upon Margaret to leave Eldersley, but she would not hear of this. She implored me to remain with her in the lodgings for one other week, and had a short advertisement inserted in the local as well as the London papers, intelligible enough to her father, should it meet his eye. As for herself, she would sit all day at the window, hidden by the curtain, but able to command a long reach of the street. She hardly ever spoke to me, but she would wring my hand, and when I kissed her sweet pale face, the tears would sometimes gather in her eyes, but she never relaxed the intentness of her gaze. I could hardly get her to eat enough to support life; she seemed to be in a sort of trance. Early in the morning, this watch would begin, Biddy always within call, and ready to rush out at a moment's notice; and as soon as the streets grew dark, Biddy began to pace up and down. This had gone on for some days, and we were sitting one morning, silent and sad, when Henry Cameron suddenly rushed in. I rose to leave the room, but he would not let me go.

'Stay,' he said, 'stay, and plead for me.'

And then he flung himself down by Margaret's side, and seizing her little hands as they lay listlessly in her lap, he kissed them again and again, while his whole frame quivered with his strong emotion. It was some minutes before he spoke.

'Margaret, I cannot part with you; I have tried it. I cannot live without you, Margaret. I thought I could the other day, when you were proud and cold. You made no allowance for the shock it was to hear all at once of this; you despised me for thinking of your fortune, thinking for a moment that matters might be hushed up. Perhaps you were right—God knows! But I thought, if you had loved me more, your path would not have seemed so clear to you. I thought there was nothing for it but breaking our engagement off. But I cannot lose you—I can bear poverty, anything with you. We'll leave the country. I can exchange into some other regiment. We can go to India. I don't care where, so you go with me. Your unhappy father—I don't want to speak a harsh word of him, Margaret—his disgrace can never touch you. You will never hear of him more; to you he'll be as one dead. I don't care what my own family say. I care for nothing but to have you for my own—my Margaret, my own wife—mine for ever.' And winding his strong arm round her waist, he raised her from the chair where she sat, kissed her hair, her lips, her throat, and clasped her to his heart again and again, as if he never would part with her more.

At length she partially disengaged herself from his grasp; and I could see her face. Its colour and roundness had returned, the soul's life was again there.

'You love me, Henry?'

No answer, save a look into her eyes, and a long kiss on her fair forehead.

'You love me?' she said again. 'I want to hear the words once more.'

'I love you, Margaret. So sure as God above hears me speak, I believe no man ever loved woman more.'

'You are willing to marry me, a portionless girl, and the daughter of a dishonoured man; willing to brave poverty and disgrace for my sake?'

'You are my life, Margaret; I cannot part with you. If we are poor, we'll struggle on together, and we shall be happy in spite of all.'

'You can bear the world's sneer, Henry? This is no hasty impulse, that one day you may repent; you have counted the cost?'

'I have, Margaret. Night and day, since we parted, I've thought the matter over. I may have been an expensive, thoughtless fellow hitherto; I can change my habits; I can do without society, friends, everything but you.'

'He loves me,' she said—'he loves me!' Then turning to me: 'You hear it; he loves me. He is generous and true.' And again that ineffable beauty came into her face.

Henry Cameron looked at her as if, even to him, its radiance was new. 'And you love *me*, my Margaret! You forgive me—you consent?'

'*I?*' she said—'*I* love *you*, Henry?' And she laid her head down on his breast, and passed her fingers through his curling hair. It was a pretty picture, as I saw it through my tears, and thankful was I to believe that Margaret might yet be happy. But it did not last long. When next she raised her head, she was deadly pale, and her voice quite changed. 'Forgive me, Henry,' she said. 'I have been selfish; but I wanted to be happy once more. I had so suffered; I had doubted of your love; I had thought poorly of you. Now, I *have* been happy. I know that I am dear to you—your poor Margaret herself, and not her fortune; and my love has all its old pride! And now, I can bless you, and there is no bitterness in this great anguish of bidding you farewell for ever! Hush! hear me to the end. My father—hush!—whatever he may be, he was tender always to me, and would have bought my happiness at the loss of his own soul. I *must* save my father; I must seek him till I find him. I *shall* find him; I shall work for him in some foreign land; there, no one knows that shame hangs on the old man's name. He, too, has suffered—his hair is grown white—my poor father!'

I could not resist interposing. 'Dear girl, if, as I fully believe, all your efforts to trace your father prove vain, surely you will not wreck Captain Cameron's happiness as well as your own?'

'*I shall find him!*' she said, in a tone that silenced me by its calm authority.

'And you can give *me* up, then, Margaret? You have not a thought for my happiness; you sacrifice me to your father thus. This is your cruel resolve?' exclaimed her lover.

'This,' she said, 'is my unalterable resolve.'

The young man's face grew very dark. His ardent love was but a great selfishness, and he overlooked her suffering in his own. Long and vehemently would he have pleaded with and reproached her, but that I implored him to spare her the further conflict, for which her deadly paleness shewed that she was quite unequal, holding out to him hopes of a change of purpose, of another interview, but in my secret heart having no hope of either. As he turned to leave her, the grandeur of her nature seemed to flash upon him, and he came back and knelt at her feet. 'You are an angel,' he said. 'I never could have been worthy of you; but I shall never love another woman!' Calmly the poor girl bent down and kissed him on his forehead. The clinging womanly fondness to which she had yielded herself up so lately seemed to have changed into the holy pity of an angel indeed. From that moment she had done with earthly happiness.

And still no sign of Mr Moore! It was now a fortnight since the terrible day on which his daughter recognised him; but she never gave up her firm conviction of his return. Her instinct was a true one. One night, Biddy saw him creep stealthily along the street, and stand still under the lamp-post, looking up at the window. The faithful creature's grasp was on him at once, and though he struggled hard, he could not shake her off. She implored him by the lost love and happiness of his young daughter—by the laughter of her childhood, and her weeping now—by the tears he had himself shed at the grave of the wife who bore her to him: she told him that Margaret had given up lover and fortune for his sake, and would he take from her life as well, and leave her alone in the world, the orphan of a living father, without a duty to bear her up against her sorrow? In short, she prevailed over the weak man's strongest purpose; and that night, when the rest of the household were asleep, she let him in, and he hid his face on his daughter's breast.

Two days later, they left England for the continent. The sale of her mother's jewels and her own trinkets brought in a sum sufficient to defray all that Margaret owed in Eldersley, and to provide for her father and herself till she could obtain pupils. Of these, her rare musical talents rendered her secure. Biddy positively refused to leave her young mistress. She had enough, she said, to pay her passage, and plenty of clothes, as good as new, for years and years to come. She could not be bothered with wages, would not know what to do with them. 'And sure, miss, dear, the master will be wanting some one to look after him; and may be he'll find it a comfort to scold some one, as he used to, in thim furrin parts. And is it cooking ye want? Sure and I've not been out and in of the kitchen of one of the raal gintry for so long without giving an eye to see how things get done. Anyhow, I'll cook a dale better than thim furriners; and it's going with ye I am, miss, to the end of the world, so sure as my name is Biddy Daly, and yours is written in heaven, glory be to God!'

They settled in Berlin. Margaret had soon more pupils than she could well undertake, and she herself played at morning concerts, in this way realising a tolerable income. Her own letters were loving but short. She never complained; but I could perceive only too plainly that her spirits never rallied, that she was resigned, but cheerful and hopeful no longer. The great trial is the hourly trial. The very energy required for the prompt decision nerves against the pain. The right hand cut off, and cast from us in a moment of generous enthusiasm, seems not so terrible; it is the after-smart, the sick reaction that is so hard to bear. Never by tone or glance to reproach those for whose sakes we have stripped our own life bare; never to believe that duty had been best undone, and selfishness more blessed than self-sacrifice—not many of us are capable of this. Perhaps even Margaret was not. Biddy's letters, with their marvellous spelling, were invaluable to me, for they gave details I should never have otherwise obtained, of admiration and love laid at the beautiful girl's feet. Biddy thanked our Lady that the young mistress was not one to demane herself by lookin' at a furriner, even if she'd had any heart to give; but sure hers broke that day Captain Cameron laid his last kiss on her lips, and the angels took it to keep and mend in heaven. But these letters contained too many a dark hint respecting 'the master's ways,' that gave me a sorrowful insight into the daily struggle my poor Margaret was called upon to bear. It lasted rather more than fifteen years—yes, fifteen years. Then Mr Moore's health began rapidly to decline. Weak and unworthy as his life had been, the pathetic beauty of his last days was all that Margaret afterwards remembered. He bore his sufferings with unfailing patience, and they seemed to ennoble his nature. His penitence, humble hope, and love for her, shone out very brightly towards the end, and he died blessing her for having saved him. That was her reward. Soon after, she returned to England. Youth and beauty were indeed gone, but might there not yet be happiness to come so intense as to restore both? Henry Cameron had never married; I could not help hoping they might meet again, when his regiment returned from the West Indies. But he died there. Margaret had not been in England a year before I received a black-edged letter in an unknown hand. It was from the colonel of his regiment, and enclosed one from Captain Cameron. I opened it with trembling hands. Only a curl of his rich brown hair, and the words, 'For Margaret—my dear!' We never now breathe his name. She who has borne so much cannot bear that emotion. But I know that curl has lain on her heart ever since, and will be there when they lay her in her coffin.

With her father's extravagant ways, it was not likely that she could have saved money at Berlin. I implored her, on her return to England, to come and live with me, but I believe mine was an injudicious wish, and she steadfastly refused. I daresay her enforced occupation has been, and is a blessing to her. Biddy is with her still in her little Bath lodging—an old woman now, and disinclined to move—and, as you know, Miss Moore gives lessons, is the regular music-teacher, indeed, at a young ladies' school. Every summer she pays me a long visit; every summer I think she grows more sweet and cheerful. Formal and cold you thought her? I cannot judge; I see my former Margaret still through what years have made her.—But I declare it's nearly dinner-time; I must go and call her.'

A GERMAN NEWSPAPER.

If a 'damp *Times*' be an indispensable adjunct to a London breakfast, *Das Neues Tagblatt* is quite as needful an accompaniment to the evening meal partaken of at 5 P.M. by the inhabitants of the pleasant little German capital where I am sojourning at present. In point of size, the *Tagblatt* bears about the same proportion to its English prototype that Hohenbraten does to London. The subscription which entitles you to have the paper brought to your house every evening for a month is thirteen kreuzers, which makes the price of a single copy exactly one-sixth of a penny sterling. Mine is regularly brought by a tiny urchin wearing extremely strong-soled boots, who tramps up the common staircase, darts through the glass-door which, in a German house, bounds each family's territory, and, marching right into the drawing-room, lays down the paper on the table with the air of a full-blown plenipotentiary. My *Mädchen*, who is gradually acquiring some tincture of English civilisation, once tried to indoctrinate this youth with the notion, that it would be more proper and respectful to deliver his paper outside; but the envoy proved recalcitrant, and the next evening—in revenge, I think—he threw the *Tagblatt* down on the top of the kitchen *Ofen*, then in the act of cooking fried ham, whence it was withdrawn by Louise in a state of such unctuous blackness, that I at once issued orders that Master Fritz should be given the free *entrée* of the salon.

The editor of our small journal, or, as he signs himself, 'D. R. d N. T.,' abates no whit of the dignity of his office, although, to English readers at least, some of his 'notices to correspondents' are rather enigmatical. I will translate one or two as literally as may be.

'The article from Leonsberg we cannot insert until it is more plainly written and more calmly expressed.'—'The article touching the Lady in the White Veil finds no acceptance.'—'To Herr N. R.: Your answer to the last attack of B. Z. we must beg to lay aside, for with mighty lords it is not good to eat cherries.' Then follow several cutting reproofs on the score of plagiarism, addressed to his contemporaries individually and collectively. 'They all,' quoth he, 'steal without acknowledgment from *Punch* and *Kladderadatsch*—the *Tagblatt* only excepted, which ever scrupulously follows the rule, *suum cuique*.'

I sometimes wonder what or whom the editor of the *Tagblatt* is like. Editors with us are such grand, nebulous sort of folks, looming so large through the mist of the mythical 'we,' that one longs to scan their *personnel*, just as a Greek of old might have craved a tête-à-tête interview with the Delphic oracle. After all, as chemists assure us that the sweetest and most pungent perfumes are extracted from extremely common, not to say disagreeable materials, so I fear me much that the throne-defying, world-reproving editor has now and then been sublimated from the dregs of the people.

In the *Tagblatt*, advertisements are inserted on very reasonable terms; and in order to adapt them to the meanest capacity, little illustrative wood-cuts of a very primitive character are prefixed. A lanky individual, with a staff like a weaver's beam across his shoulder, and a pipe of corresponding dimensions in his mouth, is portrayed seated on a hillock, placidly regarding a drove of anomalous, long-eared quadrupeds: this illustration happily heralds the announcement that a sheep-pasture is to be let. A stooping gentleman, sedulously holding an enormous watering-pot over some scrubby-looking bushes, informs the public that 'a in-all-branches-of-gardening (as hops, flowers, and vegetables) cultivation-skilled, and with-excellent-testimonials-provided gardener seeks a situation.' In the next wood-cut, a man with extended legs and arms, wild hair, and a fearfully anxious expression of countenance, is holding with both hands, and apparently at peril of his life, a furious-looking creature—a cross between the popular idea of a hippogriff and that of a dragon. The accompanying letterpress mildly informs the reader that 'a seven-year-old, bright-brown, faultless, distinguished-for-draught, and in-every-way-to-be-trusted horse, is to be sold.' Unadorned by a cut, we find the following: 'The lady who, on Monday evening at nine o'clock, was to repair to the appointed place in the same bonnet and veil as on Sunday, is politely entreated to appear there at the same hour on Wednesday and Thursday.' Under the head of *Verlorenes* (lost), a strange medley of missing property is advertised for; and while rings, pocket-handkerchiefs, hats, shoes, sticks, cloaks, and dogs all seem to have a strong propensity to desert their owners, umbrellas are decidedly the most numerous defaulters. The first advertisement which catches my eye runs thus: 'The unrighteous possessor of a black silk umbrella, with a brown carved wooden handle, is courteously entreated this umbrella—which was either left at his house, or which he for his convenience took—to deliver up.' Two other notices are headed, 'Exchanged Umbrellas.' The first is: 'The well-known gentleman who last Friday evening took away from the Café Robert a handsome green silk umbrella, had better restore it forthwith, in order to avoid unpleasant consequences.' The second: 'Last Wednesday fortnight, in Herr Koppenhofer's garden, an old green umbrella was left in exchange for a new blue silk one. A re-exchange is requested.' Simple Hohenbratener! does he not wish he may get it? The advertisements from 'brave, *solid* maidens,' requiring places, are extremely numerous: whether the latter epithet may be supposed to refer to mental qualities or to square inches of flesh, seems to remain an open question. The matrimonial advertisements are many, and remarkable in that they, for the most part, emanate from the weaker vessel. Here is one literally reproduced, and, in its charming frankness, worthy of all imitation; it is headed, 'Hohenbraten Marriage Suit,'* and is accompanied by the symbol of two hands closely locked together: 'A childless, well-to-do innkeeper's widow wishes to marry an active, respectable man of strictly upright character; and she desires this merely in order to keep up the business of her inn, and to possess once more a peaceful family circle. A personal interview will be arranged by Herm. Hugel.' One feels curious to know whether the fair widow's very practical and business-like aspirations have been fulfilled, and who 'Herm. Hugel' may be. The next is headed, 'Marriage Proposal.' 'An unmarried, healthy, and solid lady, from a country village, twenty-four years old, of a respectable family, and of pleasing and interesting appearance, furnished with all-the-for-an-active-house-dame-necessary knowledge and qualifications, wishes to marry a young man of a trade, or some other without care subsistence-of-a-family-assuring-position, and who intends to settle in this city. The lady will have, on her marriage, a fortune of two thousand florins, hard cash, together with a handsome outfit. Further particulars will, with discretion, personally, or by post-paid letters, be imparted by Commissioner Wolffram.' This 'solid lady's' considerate specification of post-paid letters seems to intimate that the 'hard cash' will have a careful keeper.

Births are not chronicled in the *Tagblatt*, but deaths are inserted in a curious and primitive manner. Preceded by a black cross, we find numerous advertisements such as the following: 'To all the friends and acquaintances of my dear husband, I make known the mournful intelligence that he, after tedious suffering, yesterday at eleven o'clock gently departed. The burial will take place next Sunday in the new cemetery. For quiet sympathy prays the deeply mourning widow, Pauline Braun, born Bührer, with her children.'

'For the honourable escort of my unhappy husband to his grave, I, the mourning widow, give my heartfelt thanks, and commend myself to further benevolence.'

'To the many friends and acquaintances of my never-to-be-forgotten husband, the Palace porter Schneider, I give the mournful intelligence that he, after seven weeks of painful illness, last night, at half-past eleven, gently fell asleep in the Lord; and on next Friday morning will be carried to his last resting place in the new Friedhof' ('court of peace,' the beautiful German expression for burying-ground).—'Our affectionate wife and mother, Dorothea, was, after a long illness, torn from us by death last Tuesday at 2 o'clock. We thank our relations and friends for their respectful escort to the grave, and also for the hymn of mourning which they sang at the burial.—The sorrowing husband, ANDREAS MÜHLBACH, and his sons, PAUL and KARL.'

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* *Verehelichungs Gesuch* is the original.

These advertisements are touching and pathetic in their quaint simplicity; but we can scarcely say as much for the notices *in memoriam*, which occasionally soar into the sublime regions of verse. Here is one, rendered as literally as possible:

IN MEMORY OF HERR GALLERY INSPECTOR TANNER.

A Christian good, yet full of mirth,
Friend Tanner no more treads the earth.
Filled with the highest, noblest zeal,
The fine arts owed to him their weal;
Men loved and praised, and at him wondered
During more years than half a hundred.
God, who beheld the taste he shewed,
And care on paintings here bestowed,
Will surely raise him to a happy doom,
And in the gallery where the saints find room,
Make him, as their inspector, ever bloom!

Sometimes, under the heading 'Ausland,' the scraps of editorial intelligence refer to England and the English; and they are certainly 'curious, if true.' Here is one which will no doubt be highly gratifying to all loyal subjects of Queen Victoria: 'Prince Alfred of England is about to sail round the world. People hope that he will see so many new things in this tour, that his ancient passion for a pretty girl at his mother's court will pass away.' Seeing that the young gentleman in question has but just attained his fourteenth year, and that the 'passion' is represented as an 'ancient' one, he must indeed be the most precocious youth on record, if we are to place implicit reliance on our friend, the editor of the *Tagblatt*.

'The Duke of Malakoff is about to marry a young and handsome Spanish lady. The duke is now tolerably old, but laurels are evergreen!'

One anecdote illustrative of our own commercial keenness, and we will take leave of our German journalist: 'As an Englishman was lately travelling through the Pyrenees, he saw one of his eccentric countrymen climbing a mountain, where many persons had already broken their necks. He hastened after him, and reached him just as he was resting a little, before attempting the most perilous part of the ascent. "You can't deny, sir," his follower exclaimed, "that in what you are about to do you are running the greatest risk, and under such circumstances, it becomes most desirable to have one's life insured. I am an agent for the —— Insurance Company, which insures in cases of accidental or sudden death. I have paper, pen, and ink with me, if you will only be so good as to sign." The enterprising traveller saw the reasonableness of the proposal, and signed his name without further question.' Whether he broke his neck or returned in safety, the editor leaves in doubt.

SHETLAND MARRIAGES.

ALL the Shetlanders marry about the age of twenty; that is, the *men* marry at twenty; as for the women, they follow quite a different rule. It sometimes does happen that both the man and woman about to be married are of an age, but this is seldom; the greater number of marriages are between youths of nineteen and maids of thirty-two. Whenever a young man can act his part in the manning of a boat, he has arrived at the height of his ambition, and therefore there is no wonder at his marrying early; but why he pitches on an old maid, instead of a young girl, is not so easily accounted for, unless it be that young men have a peculiar affection for old maids, as old men have a peculiar affection for young girls. This system of marriage holds good only with those who never leave their native soil. He who becomes a sailor, cannot generally marry so young; but he is always sure, before leaving his home, to single out the object of his future affections. In no country is a lover so faithful to his mistress as in Shetland. I never heard of a Shetland sailor who was guilty of a breach of promise, although he should be absent for ten years. Not only does he not break his engagement, but he never fails to write to his beloved one in effusions of the most endearing nature, always beginning or ending his epistles with 'My Pet,' 'My Jewel,' 'My Watch,' or 'My Diamond!' Years before the celebration of the marriage, the woman is by no means slack in telling all her neighbours of the particulars of the engagement, and of the year, and of the month, and of the day, and of the hour when it is to be celebrated. Such an extraordinary licence of ante-nuptial tattle would be hardly suitable for countries where the bride sometimes misses the bridegroom even at the horns of the altar. The woman has another licence which is more peculiar: she is allowed to have a temporary lover during the absence of the true one. This licence is given by the absent lover himself; but the moment he returns home, the temporary lover must desist from making any more visits. How far the temporary lover may carry on his suit, I could never accurately ascertain; but it is generally understood that they may ogle, joke, kiss at the back of the door, and squeeze hands when parting. The absent lover is allowed no licence of this sort, but must walk as circumspectly as though he were married. Whether he strictly adheres to such a course of chaste behaviour cannot always be found out; but it is certain that, if alive, he will return home and marry her who is as dear to him as life itself. When the marriage-ceremony is performed—not by a priest, for there is not a Roman Catholic in all Shetland, but by some Protestant clergyman of the Established Church, or of some dissenting denomination, of which there are many—the marriage-party, a mixed assemblage of old and young, set off immediately on a short tour, until it draws near the dinner-hour. This tour must be gone through so as to form a circle, and must not, on any account, be contrary to the course of the sun, else the young couple's fortunes from that day take a backward course.

As soon as they return home, they sit down to dinner, where the tables are sure to be groaning under loads of beef, mutton, fowl, fish, and *bursting*. Bursting is used at every meal in Shetland: it is made from black oats, made blacker by burning in a pot over the fire, while undergoing the process of drying. It is then ground by a hand-mill, when it might be sold for snuff, if people had no senses but sight. Lastly, it is baked into round balls of different sizes, which are a very little flattened, but not so much so that they can be compared to the Scotch bannock. These burstings are generally baked with suet, and thus they comprise the greater part of Shetland bread. The dinner being over, and having washed well their throats with whisky—for they are all exceedingly fond of drink of any sort—they commence the dance. In this art they are wonderful proficients, for they can dance hours without intermission. A row of men occupies one side of the house from end to end, and a row of women stands opposite. The fiddler strikes up some riotous and ranting tune; the dancers begin—they skip, they frisk, they fling, they leap with the utmost agility, assuming every posture and attitude. Some lean forward, and are intent in examining the skipping and frisking of their feet; some lean backward, and have their eyes fixed on the ceiling of the house for half an hour. One man is leaning sideways, and with sidelong glance is graciously admiring the frisking of *one* of his feet; every one, in short, has some peculiar and original dance of his own. In these different and peculiar postures they continue, without reeling, for half an hour, thumping and pelting at it, till perspiration streams to the ground and mist ascends in clouds, or, as Burns would have said, 'till ilka body swat and reekit.' During the half hour they thus dance without reeling, every one is trying his utmost in cutting as many strange capers as possible, and ever and anon all roar out: 'Good-luck to thee, lad!' and 'Good-luck to thee, lass!' The lad and the lass who have such a shower of 'good-lucks' hailed upon them are of course the bridegroom and bride. All the Shetlanders address each other without distinction in the Quaker style, by thous and thees, and by every other familiarity used by that innocent body of people.

There is another circumstance about the dance that strikes a stranger very much. All the dancers have shoes made of cow-hide, with the hairy side out; and thus some have black feet, some white feet, some red feet, and some speckled feet. These shoes they call *rivlans*. Whenever they intend to reel, one of them takes the lead, and all the rest follow; or perhaps the fiddler gives intimation that it is time for them to do so by making a discordant and hideous sound on the bass-string of his fiddle. They do not reel for half an hour, but run twice or thrice round the house, and then set to the dance again with redoubled fury. Burns must have seen something similar to the Shetland mode of dancing before he described his dance of the witches. I never fully understood or saw the force of that till I witnessed Shetland weddings. It is no uncommon thing for neighbours, who have not been invited to the marriage, to dress in disguise, and participate in the festivities of the evening. The usual way they disguise themselves is by rolling the body up in straw-rope and blackening the face. These maskers have usually all the privileges of bidden guests, and are treated with great civility. At the end of every dance, every man *must* kiss his female partner. Sometimes the men dance by themselves, as the women cannot hold out to such long and furious exercise; and when they finish their dance, they do not kiss, but hug each other to such a degree so as to create disgust in those who have been unaccustomed to such a habit. When they are overpowered with feasting and mirth, all of them sleep on the floor, without any distinction or regularity, like so many young pigs, huddled together in the utmost confusion. They rise some time next day, to renew their mirth and feasting, which, indeed, continue for some days; a custom, however, now on the wane. There is one thing worthy of observation about *all* Shetland marriages: I never knew a real original native man of Shetland who married a woman of any other county or country; on the other hand, a Shetland woman often gets married to men of other counties throughout the kingdom, and her parents are exceedingly fond of such extraneous matches. Thus, the Shetland women have a better chance of getting married than any other women in Britain.

HIDDEN COMFORTERS.

Those idle hands upon her lap lay not, they rather hung
Like dead hands which from living grasp have carelessly
been flung;
You saw that life still dwelt within by the deep heaving
breast,
Save there, the woeful form displayed no motion—no
no rest.

The eyes were dry—their power was lost in tears to
find relief;
While the tongue's very muteness spoke the eloquence
of grief;
But if the quivering lips *had* breathed the prayer of
that sad heart,
They would have asked for leave to mourn forgotten
and apart.

For there are times when soothing words seem mocking
human woe,
And half-resentful thoughts reply: '*How can the
glad hearts know?*'
And thus with her; she saw her own, but saw an
other's cross,
Nor guessed that she might find that gain which now
she counts a loss.

Far less deemed she, when Hunger came and harshly
bade her rise,
That 'neath his dreaded form there lay an angel in
disguise;
Or that stern Want, who sharply cried: 'Up, to your
toil again!'
By Heaven was sent to lift the load from her half-
frenzied brain.

Yet these stern messengers have done what gentle
ne'er had wrought,
For the poor mourner's daily toil demands its meed of
thought;
Each simple task the hands complete, acts as a homely
wile,
First teaching the dim eyes to weep, and then the lips
to smile.

O ye who think that Labour owns no power to soothe
and bless,
Learn, that a tenfold venom lurks mid *grief in idleness*:
Learn, that 'Our Father' often sends mercy in sternest
guise,
And homely forms hide angel-guests from our earth-
blinded eyes.

Ruth Buck.

On Saturday, the 7th of January 1860, *will be commenced in this Journal,*

A STORY, entitled

THE BATEMAN HOUSEHOLD, AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

By JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF 'STORIES AND SKETCHES,' &c. &c.

To be continued every week until completed.

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A LONDON FOG.

WHEN I leave my southern and suburban retreat at ten, the upper sky is blue; the sun shines gaily down upon the rime-covered rails, and walls, and plants; the frost-fog which, a few hours ago, saturated with moonlight, brooded everywhere in filmy folds of silver-shot gauze, is fast rolling itself up, and can only be seen now in any mass at the ends of bye-streets. The day is bright and bitter as a cruel wit. All noses have a mangel-wurzel tint, and a savage, quivering curl like that of an ill-conditioned cur's. All hands are thrust deep in muffs, and coat and trouser pockets, save the raw beef-like wrists and fists of yonder costermonger, who seems to be trying to keep himself warm by bawling as if about to burst a blood-vessel, and constant belabouring of his donkey. Fumes, white as cigar-smoke, pour from every mouth and nostril; when they cross the sunbeams, you appear to be breathing volatilised bronze. 'Winter has set in early,' originally remarks one top-coated, furred, and mittened old gentleman to another, whom he meets at the door of the railway station. 'Ah, yes; fine seasonable weather, though,' is the original reply. The little crossing-sweeper, with chilblains breaking out in blue buds all over his bare feet, who has followed the old gentleman across the road, constantly tugging at his mingled crop of mildewed cap and mangy hair, is by no means of the same opinion. The crossing-sweeper abominates a frost. At such times the public regard his office as a sinecure, and decline to hunt stray coppers with numb fingers for its pay. Poor little Brooms, I fear, will get to-night the thrashing which his affectionate mamma invariably gives him, with the handle of his implement, when he has failed to bring home the tale of copper coin at which she assesses his crossing.

Colder and colder, clearer and clearer, it is getting. The fire in the waiting-room, by its steady glow, crowned with a lambent flicker of pale purple, gives token of the intensity of the frost. So do the muffetees and sharp answers of the ticket-clerk, angry at being obliged to open his pigeon-hole, and let the biting outside air into his cozy cupboard, wherein a jolly little fire is roaring, and from which is emitted just the faintest suspicion of the odour of old Cognac: yes, *perdu* behind the newspaper, I can see a little tumbler, with spoon, and reeking, amber-hued contents. The boy at the book-stall on the platform keeps up a constant tread-mill dance, as with dead, swollen fingers, from which the icy paper-knife is ever slipping, he tries to cut a *Chambers* for a customer. He glares fiercely at the red and yellow covers of his cheap novels, as if they mocked him with Barmecide caloric. The porters, instead of lounging about, according to their wont, exciting in inquiring minds perplexed speculations as to the nature of their function, and the necessity of their engagement, are scrubbing away with might and main, and very black and greasy dusters, at every bit of brass about the carriages. It is the cold that has made them so industrious. Panting like locomotives, they breathe upon the metal, and then scour and scour until the sunlight, pouring through the station-windows, flashes back from the perfect polish with dazzling radiance. Every knob blossoms out into a golden thistle. My fellow-passengers rush to their seats, pull up the glasses, and strive to increase their animal heat by clubbing together like crowding sheep.

Before I join them, I walk to the end of the platform, to see if the down-train, whose engine will have to carry us to town, be coming. To my astonishment, I find that not a quarter of a mile from the shed the sunlight ceases. The golden rails, the road of frosted silver, terminate abruptly in a cloud of brownish-yellow fog, which blots everything from view on that side. When we enter this cloud, we can make out the sun for a time, with ragged rays like unkempt red hair about his copper-coloured face; a tree or two, black, leafless, and moistly miserable; sparse houses, with cats upon their roof-ridges—magnified by the mist into prowling pumas—and chimney-pots, over which the sluggish smoke creams like phantasmal heads of porter. Soon, however, we are rolling along through a mere fog-tunnel without a single shaft. First the sun had his head shaved, and looked down upon us with drear, bald, bullet pate, like Hogarth's raving rake's. Smaller and smaller, redder and redder, grew his face. As puff after puff from our engine partially obscured it, the rubicund cheeks paled and quivered like an indignant alderman's; now the tiny ball of light is quenched entirely in the up-surging sea of vapour, and when we stop at Spa Road, the guard comes with a lamp for our tickets.

Bang!—a fog-signal has exploded, and, in a minute, a Dover train creeps by, the locomotive snorting wrathfully at being reined in to a funeral pace. As we slowly follow on our parallel line, we dimly distinguish a rank of extemporised signal-men, navvies with little red flags in their hands. You can barely make out the hue before it melts into the greasy gloom. What are those dark, lanky objects on the other side of the way? Chimneys peering over the parapets, or policemen stationed in the recesses?

Outside the terminus, I look down into Tooley

Street, and wonder that the men and horses crawling at the bottom of what appears a deep canal should not be drowned. I am fairly in for what I have often read of, but never before witnessed in its prime—a London Fog, and determine to 'wander darkling' through the city, noting, as best I may, its salient features.

You might imagine that all the steamers in the world were silently blowing their steam off in the river, so dense are the fumes that rise from the waters and enshroud the bridge; but not a single funnel puffs to-day. The Thames takes holiday; Lord Mayor Fog has stopped its traffic. Ay, you may crane over the clammy battlement and strain your eyes, but you will only be able to hear, not see, the black stream running through the arches. There is something very *eerie* in the muffled murmur of that veiled soliloquist. What is he talking of down there? Of the suicides that have yielded to his sombre seduction, and leaped to his cold bosom? There is a horrid chuckle in the swirl of the waters round the invisible piers that excites this fancy. You fear to pry too curiously into the mist, lest you should see sad spectres roaming there, with draggled locks, dripping garments, and despair-struck faces. What you do see is, in the centre of the river, nothing; on the banks, half of a deck or two, whereon colourless figures clap their hands across their chests, or heave away at vacancy as if it were a winch; fragments of cranes swinging nothing, nowhence, nowhither; spars and all kinds of *disjecta membra navium* bristling through the murk in self-supported isolation. On the Middlesex side of the bridge stands an old man selling spectacles; he does not, as on ordinary days, merely proffer his queer collection of rusty steel and battered horn in patient silence, but presses his wares importunately upon you. I have not passed him five minutes before I half regret that I did not patronise him, my eyes so ache and smart with peering, unglazed, through the gloom.

At every crossing, there is an ever-increasing congress of feeble old gentlemen and unprotected females. Will they ever get across, I wonder, or go on gathering there all day, to be advertised for in to-morrow's *Times* as 'missing?' That stout old lady, with the corpulent umbrella, which would serve for a model, on a reduced scale, of her figure, evidently begins to fear, although it is not yet noon, that she will have to stop all night shivering upon the kerb-stone. The poor old soul is just about to blubber like a lost child, when a tall policeman bids her 'Cheer up, granny!' and gallantly escorts her through the bewildering chaos of horses' legs and wheels. If it were not for the real terror they experience, and the real danger they run, there would be something very ludicrous in the frantic efforts which some of these waiters upon providence, rendered reckless by long waiting, dash out into to thread the throng. Gobbling angrily like a turkey-cock, a red-gilled old gentleman, in gold spectacles and green spencer, totters into the Rubicon—that is, the gutter. He weathers triumphantly the first danger, a huge railway van, whose mountainous freight of woolsacks is literally cloud-capped. He manages with much difficulty to double the pole of an omnibus, and, slipping between two cabs, to get three parts of the way across; but then, alas! a costermonger drives a 'shallow' against his shins, a Hansom harasses him on one flank, a piano-van menaces him on the other, the nose of a butcher's horse attacks his rear, a furniture-wagon bars his progress, and he thinks himself very fortunate to be able to reach once more the side from which he started. The *Te Deum* which he sings for his deliverance, however, makes the good lady at his elbow shudder. For some five minutes, trembling like a jelly with excitement and impotent rage, he punches the pavement with his stick, and indulges in a burst of what Lord Cockburn calls 'solid commination.' A grinning *gamin* near him solemnly shakes his head, and tells the fiery old fellow not to talk like that, or he'll tell his mother!

Emerging from the mist, distorted by the mist, and again vanishing in the mist, the passing vehicles seem merely the unsubstantial shadows of badly managed magic-lantern slides. All the outlines are blurred, all hues toned down to one dull neutral tint. You see the heads of the horses a second or two before you discover the dimly looming coach or cart they draw. The ceaseless rumble of unseen wheels has an effect somewhat similar to that of the splash of the unseen river. Your eye no longer analysing the items of its cause, it becomes the harsh, ruthless voice of crushing London life. Not paving-stones, but hearts, are being gradually ground to powder.

A sheriff's gaudily decorated carriage flits by. How doleful look poor Jeames and John Thomas hanging on behind! Their tags droop limp like plumes of half-drowned birds; their noble calves are quivering with cold, and ruck, in their collapse, their snowy hose with most unseemly creases. A damp flunkey is to me the most exquisite of spectacles.

Where the streets are wide, the fog is gray—a watery mist that makes you think the Earth has turned laundress for the Universe; but where narrow ways wind between banks of many-storied houses, the darkness deepens into a tawny night; the lights high up that dot it, look like bilious stars. In Threadneedle Street, I almost have to grope. An agitated country gentleman flounders into my arms, and inquires whether that be *Cannon* Street! The Bank is a mere fog-bank. The quadrangle of the Royal Exchange is a fog-tank. I pity her moist Majesty in the centre, and the poor Duke outside. He looks sadly in need of a hat, spatterdashes, and a sensible tight-buttoning Mackintosh instead of mantle. The corners of the corridors are so Egyptian in their blackness, that I have a superstitious dread of entering them, until reassured by the presence of the beadle; who, in gold-laced cocked-hat stuck jauntily on one side, and gold-laced blue gabardine hanging to his heels, rushes round and round the building, as if he were in training, and trying to bring down his fat. A beadle taking active exercise is not to be seen every day, and I watch with much interest the majestic though unwieldy creature. Something, however, that you may see every day—even on such a day as this—I find in those dark corners: the pale, sad, silent people, whom Mr Sala, I think, calls 'city spectres;' the shabby men who plant themselves upon the benches by the walls, and sit and sit for hours in melancholy patience, saying nothing, eating nothing, motionless, objectless. Why do they cling fungus-like to the walls of the Exchange? What makes them haunt, taciturn and unsympathising as ghosts, the bustling centre of the wide world's business? Their pinched and pallid faces always give me the idea, that they have made an appointment there with Death, and that he is a little behind his time.

Everywhere, indoors, the gas was lighted long ago. I peep through the bank windows, and see long lines of green-shaded lamps, making sicklier still the sickly faces of the clerks, bending, round-shouldered, over their ledgers. The silversmiths have got their reflectors out; the tobacconist has turned up his usual blue bead of light into a full yellow flare; the druggist's red bottles cast on the pavement a faint stain of blood; the tea-dealers pull down their rattling scales by gas-light; the long, fog-choked vistas of the drapers' shops are spitted with feebly burning jets; the gin-shops and the dining-rooms are as bright as they will be at night; in fourth-floor offices and cavernous cellars, blazing in front of butchers' stalls, and shining on the brazen harness of black, elephantine horses far down in deep archways, the sibilant gas is singing.

I roam through Leadenhall Market. The brilliant plumage of the pheasant is dimmed; you expect the plucked poultry to shiver; the straw wherein live

have a monomaniac love of contrast. In the Gardens I find four young ladies sitting on the broad-walk benches, and one in the summer-house where Mr Arthur Pendennis flicked the dust off his boots, and spied out Fanny Bolton. The dust is pretty well laid now, and surely these silly girls must wish to catch colds instead of lovers. The only males besides myself on whom they can play off their arts are two old bricklayers, lazily repairing the slimy river-wall. When I look down upon them paddling in the slush, they make me think of semi-torpid alligators. A row of black piles, with little scratch-wigs of hoar-frost, is planted along the wall. The solid water-mist seen through the slightly less substantial land-
river from its
Temple Stairs
darkness. So
full of souls,
is the channel,
the midst of
g in the thick

of the Temple's
ones still left
eriff's flunkeys.
eir crisp smart-
. They hang
nd slovenly of

f the Temple I
n me, high wet
er above me, I
frog. The gas
dismal enough,
ked, flickering
l. They burn
se-candles in a
sits beside that
two unoccupied
d hear stealthy
ange old-world
sat there alone.
Temple Lane, a
foaming pewter
s, who has been
ng in his own

Pillars, and St
ket. A flock of
ken drover, two
ateur assistants,
to their ankles,
ks, rush through
rrows of putrid
ppearing in fog-
nned in before a
ether is goaded
im, leaping over
ess to be killed,
n, blood-reeking
ly composed of
tle shops. The
eyes and out-
econd door like a
e. The window-
announcing the
and bones; and
wheel-barrow-
gar that may be
lispose of their
blishment.' The
e over this poor
d beer and rank
and fusty odours
with the native
es like veritable
ial, and rests on
the neighbouring rich man's mart as well. In Covent Garden, it keeps unmelted the frost upon the cart-tilts and the piles of corrugated cabbages. It boldly enters the Arcade, and claims intrusive fellowship with its sunny stores. The pale gold of the forbidden fruit, the bloomy purple of the grape, the pœcil

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[OVER.

beauty of exotic posies, and the brilliant flash of the gold-fish, have a strange aspect when viewed through brown November fog.

I cannot see the top of the Nelson Column when I cross Trafalgar Square: it seems a pillar planted to shore up the sky tumbling amain on all sides. The squirting fountains strike me as adding insult to injury. Isn't the air moist enough without their help?

On the helmets, and cuirasses, and scabbards of the mounted sentries at the Horse Guards the fog condenses like breath on glass, and flows down in trickling streams. Tiny dew-drops tremble on their moustaches, which have sadly lost their lackered gloss. Their dismounted brother, stalking under the archway yonder, in boots that seem too heavy for even his long legs to lift, 'looms in the distance' like a gigantic Cochin-China's ghost.

By the time that I have strolled round St James's Park, and marked that here, as at the Exchange, the seedy *habitués*, who sit silent on the benches—in this case, staring with lacklustre eyes into the ornamental water instead of the quadrangle—maintain their posts with inexplicable fortitude, although you might write your name in the fat dew on the seats, I begin to think that I have had enough of fog, and should prefer some dinner. I jump into an omnibus, and jolt back to London Bridge. It is now about three in the afternoon, but genuine night—or rather the awful gloom of eclipse—has descended on the city. Lurid torches dance, flaring over the crossings, as the imp-like link-boys, with wild shouts, pilot fearful and moneyed passengers.

Through the fog-tunnel again we ramble. Suddenly light shoots through the dusk like the brilliance of *Eau d'Or*, when the sediment is shaken, and just before we arrive at Deptford, we come out in glass-clear air beneath a turquoise sky, and see far off the dome of the Crystal Palace flashing in the westering sunbeams like a Titan's golden shield.

'Truly, the light *is* sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun!'

CHARLES DARWIN ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES.

Heretofore, most naturalists have regarded *species* as a cluster of characters affecting a particular group of plants or animals, which goes on through generations, either wholly without change, or with only occasional variations liable to be easily obliterated. In the geological record, they have seen organisms specifically distinguished make their appearance with particular formations, and after a certain term of existence disappear, as if they had then become extinct; a necessary sequel to this view being that none of the species now existing can be traced further back than the tertiary or last great formation, while most of the conspicuous plants and animals of our epoch have apparently come into existence since that period. How species originated, naturalists have not concerned themselves to inquire, either regarding the question as too mysterious to be solved by science, or being content to assume that there was a particular effort of creative providence engaged in each case.

To any one who haunted Section D at the British Association during the last few years, it was evident that science was beginning to consider this question as not so hopelessly insoluble as naturalists had been accustomed to represent it. When, moreover, it had become a fashion to regard all the operations of the physical world as conducted in an order or fixed arrangement, it might have been anticipated that there would not long be wanting men to surmise that the succession of organisms revealed by geology had also been under some divine appointment of the same general nature—one connected phenomenon, instead of many. It should not, therefore, surprise us very much that a naturalist of the highest reputation has now come forward with an attempt to solve the question on purely scientific grounds. Mr Charles Darwin won his first laurels, many years ago, as naturalist of the *Beagle* in her voyage round the world; he has since lived much in retirement, on account of the state of his health, but devoting himself all the time to experimental inquiries regarding this very subject. The result is a pile of observations calculated to form a large work, but of which he has been pleased to send forth an introductory sketch or summary in the volume before us.*

Mr Darwin's theory is, that there is a real variability in organisms, acting through the medium of the reproductive system; and that when the progeny so varied finds itself better adapted for the surrounding conditions than its predecessors, it gains an ascendency in the competition of the multitude of creatures for existence, establishes itself, and exterminates those which it has vanquished. A *variety* in botany or zoology he contemplates as 'species in the process of formation,' or 'incipient species;' and he implies that the apparent fixity of the idea of species would give way, if we had the objects under our attention for a sufficient time to enable us to observe so large a transition. That man, by selecting individuals for breeding of the domestic animals, 'unconsciously' produces varieties in these species, is undoubted. Mr Darwin sees a natural process of selection constantly going on with like effects. 'Let us,' says he, 'take the case of a wolf, which preys on various animals, securing some by craft, some by strength, and some by fleetness; and let us suppose that the fleetest prey—a deer, for instance—had, from any change in the country, increased in numbers, or that other prey had decreased in numbers during that season of the year when the wolf is hardest pressed for food. I can, under such circumstances, see no reason to doubt that the swiftest and slimmest wolves would have the best chance of surviving, and so be preserved or selected—provided always that they retained strength to master their prey at this or at some other period of the year, when they might be compelled to prey on other animals. I can see no more reason to doubt this, than that man can improve the fleetness of his greyhounds by careful and methodical selection, or by that unconscious selection which results from each man trying to keep the best dogs without any thought of modifying the breed.'

'Even,' he continues, 'without any change in the proportional numbers of the animals on which our wolf preyed, a cub might be born with an innate tendency to pursue certain kinds of prey. Nor can this be thought very improbable; for we often observe great differences in the natural tendencies of our domestic animals: one cat, for instance, taking to catch rats; another, mice; one cat, according to Mr St John, bringing home winged game; another, hares or rabbits; and another hunting on marshy ground, and almost nightly catching woodcocks or snipes. The tendency to catch rats rather than mice is known to be inherited. Now, if any slight innate change of habit or of structure benefited an individual wolf, it would have the best chance of surviving and of leaving offspring. Some of its young would probably inherit the same habits or structure, and by the repetition of this process, a new variety might be formed which would either supplant or coexist with the parent-form of wolf. Or, again, the wolves inhabiting a mountainous district, and those frequenting the lowlands, would naturally be forced to hunt different prey; and from the continued preservation of the individuals best fitted for the two sites, two varieties might slowly be formed.'

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* *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle of Life.* By Charles Darwin, M.A. London: Murray. 1859.

Another of his illustrations touches curiously on those mutual adaptations of natural objects which have been so often noticed, shewing how, in the course of the general providential design, they might come about. 'I can see no reason,' says he, 'to doubt that an accidental deviation in the size and form of the body, or in the curvature and length of the proboscis, &c., far too slight to be appreciated by us, might profit a bee or other insect, so that an individual so characterised would be able to obtain its food more quickly, and so have a better chance of living and leaving descendants. Its descendants would probably inherit a tendency to a similar slight deviation of structure. The tubes of the corollas of the common red and incarnate clovers (*Trifolium pratense* and *incarnatum*) do not, on a hasty glance, appear to differ in length; yet the hive-bee can easily suck the nectar out of the incarnate clover, but not out of the common red clover, which is visited by humble-bees alone; so that whole fields of the red clover offer in vain an abundant supply of precious nectar to the hive-bee. Thus, it might be a great advantage to the hive-bee to have a slightly longer or differently constructed proboscis. On the other hand, I have found, by experiment, that the fertility of clover greatly depends on bees visiting and moving parts of the corolla, so as to push the pollen on to the stigmatic surface. Hence, again, if humble-bees were to become rare in any country, it might be a great advantage to the red clover to have a shorter or more deeply divided tube to its corolla, so that the hive-bee could visit its flowers. Thus, I can understand how a flower and a bee might slowly become, either simultaneously, or one after the other, modified and adapted in the most perfect manner to each other, by the continued preservation of individuals presenting mutual and slightly favourable deviations of structure.'

There would appear to be, according to Mr Darwin, a natural provocation to variety, 'for,' says he, 'the more living beings can be supported on a given area, the more they diverge in structure, habits, and constitution.' Therefore, he adds, the more diversified the descendants of any one species become, the better will be their chance of succeeding in the battle of life. Having remarked, in recapitulation, that natural selection leads to divergence of character and to much extinction of intermediate forms of life, he expresses his belief that 'on these principles the nature of the affinity of all organic beings may be explained.' 'It is a truly wonderful fact—the wonder of which we are apt to overlook from familiarity—that all animals and all plants throughout all time and space should be related to each other in group subordinate to group, in the manner which we everywhere behold—namely, varieties of the same species most closely related together; species of the same genus less closely and unequally related together, forming sections and sub-genera; species of distinct genera much less closely related; and genera related in different degrees, forming sub-families, families, orders, sub-classes, and classes. The several subordinate groups in any class cannot be ranked in a single file, but seem rather to be clustered round points, and these round other points, and so on in almost endless cycles. On the view that each species has been independently created, I can see no explanation of this great fact in the classification of all organic beings; but, to the best of my judgment, it is explained through inheritance and the complex action of natural selection, entailing extinction and divergence of character.'

Mr Darwin admits several difficulties in the way of his theory, and treats them with great candour. We have not space to advert to his remarks on the sterility of hybrids, the geographical distribution of organisms, or, indeed, any other difficulty but that resting in the apparent suddenness of the commencement and extinction of species in the earlier ages of the world. Here, he thinks, explanation lies in the extreme imperfection of the geological record. A formation represents but a brief space of time, compared with the blanks that lie between, and even formations have only been examined in a few widely separated parts of the earth. As the matter stands, we constantly find this class of difficulties. For example, mammalia appeared a few years ago to have commenced abruptly with the tertiary formation; now, 'the richest accumulation of mammals belongs to the middle of the secondary series.' 'Cuvier used to urge that no monkey occurred in any tertiary stratum; but now extinct species have been discovered in India, South America, and in Europe even as far back as the eocene stage.' Such facts prohibit us from speculating on the exact point of time for the appearance of any species on the face of the earth. We are equally forbidden to allege, with Sir Roderick Murchison, that the Lower Silurian fossils are the earliest animals on the globe. Mr Darwin admits how grave these difficulties have been, since they have caused 'all the eminent naturalists, as Cuvier, Owen, Agassiz, Barrande, Falconer, and E. Forbes, and all our greatest geologists, as Lyell, Murchison, and Sedgwick, unanimously, and often vehemently, to maintain the immutability of species.' But he has 'reason to believe that one great authority, Sir Charles Lyell, from further reflection, entertains grave doubts on this subject.' And, after all, how significant are the facts, that 'the organic remains from an intermediate formation are intermediate in character,' and that 'fossils from two consecutive formations are far more closely related to each other than are the fossils from two remote formations.' Of this last truth, Pictet gives a well-known instance, 'the general resemblance of the organic remains from the several stages of the chalk formation, though the species are distinct in each stage.' It seems 'alone, from its generality, to have shaken Professor Pictet in his firm belief of the immutability of species.' 'On the theory of descent,' says Mr Darwin, 'the full meaning of the fact of fossil remains from closely consecutive formations, though ranked as distinct species, being closely related, is obvious.'

The curious modern doctrine of morphology is pressed by Mr Darwin into the service of his theory. 'Most physiologists believe that the bones of the skull are homologous with—that is, correspond in number and in relative connection with—the elemental parts of a certain number of vertebræ. The anterior and posterior limbs in each member of the vertebrate and articulate classes are plainly homologous. We see the same law in comparing the wonderfully complex jaws and legs in crustaceans. It is familiar to almost every one, that in a flower the relative position of the sepals, petals, stamens, and pistils, as well as their intimate structure, are intelligible on the view that they consist of metamorphosed leaves, arranged in a spire. In monstrous plants, we often get direct evidence of the possibility of one organ being transformed into another; and we can actually see in embryonic crustaceans, and in many other animals, and in flowers, that organs, which, when mature, become extremely different, are at an early stage of growth exactly alike. How inexplicable are these facts on the ordinary view of creation! Why should the brain be enclosed in a box composed of such numerous and such extraordinarily shaped pieces of bone? As Owen has remarked, the benefit derived from the yielding of the separate pieces in the act of parturition of mammals, will by no means explain the same construction in the skulls of birds. Why should similar bones have been created in the formation of the wing and leg of a bat, used as they are for such totally different purposes? Why should one crustacean, which has an extremely complex mouth formed of many parts, consequently always have fewer legs; or conversely, those with many legs have simpler mouths? Why should the sepals, petals, stamens, and pistils in any individual flower, though fitted for such widely different purposes, be all constructed on the same pattern?

'On the theory of natural selection, we can satisfactorily answer these questions. In the vertebrata, we see a series of internal vertebræ bearing certain processes and appendages; in the articulata, we see the body divided into a series of segments, bearing external appendages; and in flowering plants, we see a series of successive spiral whorls of leaves. An indefinite repetition of the same part or organ is the common characteristic (as Owen has observed) of all low or little-modified forms; therefore, we may readily believe that the unknown progenitor of the vertebrata possessed many vertebræ; the unknown progenitor of the articulata many segments; and the unknown progenitor of flowering-plants, many spiral whorls of leaves. We have formerly seen that parts, many times repeated, are eminently liable to vary in number and structure; consequently, it is quite probable that natural selection, during a long-continued course of modification, should have seized on a certain number of the primordially similar elements, many times repeated, and have adapted them to the most diverse purposes. And as the whole amount of modification will have been effected by slight successive steps, we need not wonder at discovering in such parts or organs a certain degree of fundamental resemblance, retained by the strong principle of inheritance.'

He takes help likewise from the doctrines of embryology—'namely, the very general, but not universal difference in structure between the embryo and the adult; of parts in the sàme individual embryo, which ultimately become very unlike, and serve for diverse purposes, being at this early period of growth alike; of embryos of different species within the same class, generally, but not universally, resembling each other; of the structure of the embryo not being closely related to its conditions of existence, except when the embryo becomes at any period of life active, and has to provide for itself; of the embryo apparently having sometimes a higher organisation than the mature animal into which it is developed.' He believes that all these things can be explained on the view of 'descent with modification.' 'On the principle of successive variations not always supervening at an early age, and being inherited at a corresponding not early period of life, we can clearly see why the embryos of mammals, birds, reptiles, and fishes, should be so closely alike, and should be so unlike the adult forms.'

'Disuse,' he proceeds to say, 'aided sometimes by natural selection, will often tend to reduce an organ, when it has become useless by changed habits or under changed conditions of life; and we can clearly understand on this view the meaning of rudimentary organs. But disuse and selection will generally act on each creature, when it has come to maturity, and has to play its full part in the struggle for existence, and will thus have little power of acting on an organ during early life; hence the organ will not be much reduced or rendered rudimentary at this early age. The calf, for instance, has inherited teeth, which never cut through the gums of the upper jaw, from an early progenitor having well-developed teeth; and we may believe that the teeth in the mature animal were reduced, during successive generations, by disuse, or by the tongue and palate having been fitted by natural selection to browse without their aid; whereas, in the calf, the teeth have been left untouched by selection or disuse, and on the principle of inheritance at corresponding ages have been inherited from a remote period to the present day. On the view of each organic being and each separate organ having been specially created, how utterly inexplicable it is that parts, like the teeth in the embryonic calf, or like the shrivelled wings under the soldered wing-covers of some beetles, should thus so frequently bear the plain stamp of inutility! Nature may be said to have taken pains to reveal, by rudimentary organs and by homologous structures, her scheme of modification, which it seems that we wilfully will not understand.'

Mr Darwin fully expects that his views, if accepted, will revolutionise natural history. They will, as his experience teaches him, immensely increase its interest as a study. They may also afford a help in the breeding of animals for economic purposes. On the general effect in natural theology, he thus remarks: 'Authors of the highest eminence seem to be fully satisfied with the view that each species has been independently created. To my mind, it accords better with what we know of the laws impressed on matter by the Creator, that the production and extinction of the past and present inhabitants of the world should have been due to secondary causes, like those determining the birth and death of the individual. When I view all beings not as special creations, but as the lineal descendants of some few beings which lived long before the first bed of the Silurian system was deposited, they seem to me to become ennobled. Judging from the past, we may safely infer that not one living species will transmit its unaltered likeness to a distant futurity. And of the species now living, very few will transmit progeny of any kind to a far-distant futurity; for the manner in which all organic beings are grouped, shews that the greater number of species of each genus, and all the species of many genera, have left no descendants, but have become utterly extinct. We can so far take a prophetic glance into futurity as to foretell that it will be the common and widely spread species belonging to the larger and dominant groups which will ultimately prevail and procreate new and dominant species. As all the living forms of life are the lineal descendants of those which lived long before the Silurian epoch, we may feel certain that the ordinary succession by generation has never once been broken, and that no cataclysm has desolated the whole world. Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of equally inappreciable length. And as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection.'

It will be interesting to observe the effect, in the scientific world, of such views brought forward on scientific grounds by a naturalist of eminence.

SPEECH WITHOUT WORDS.

'I don't see, Aunt Georgey,' observed a small boy of five and a half, who was sticking at his figures during an arithmetical examination—'I don't see the *good* of the multiplication table. It seems to me to be going through so much to get at so little.'

'You'd rather play at "Tit, tat, toe," I daresay, Dickey,' remarked his beloved aunt, smiling sardonically.

'Ay, there's something *in* that,' replied the youth, unconscious of her sarcasm; 'one sees what one is driving at there, all along.'

'Nevertheless, everything has its use,' persisted the old lady, who was a very Minerva for aphorisms, and like that heathen celebrity, kept a bird, which, however, was not an owl, but a parrot. 'No one can tell what immense advantages may flow from the acquisition'——

'From the what?' interrupted the rude lad, who was of an inquiring rather than a reverent disposition.

'From learning the least things, my dear.'

'Ah,' observed the boy, 'I daresay: there's the alphabet now, for instance, ain't there? Who ever first hit on *that*, I wonder, to teach a fellow to read?'

'Ay, and there's the deaf and dumb alphabet, too, Dickey, which teaches people to talk without words.'

'And were you ever deaf and dumb, Aunt Georgey? O my, what a funny go!'

'If you won't use these *very* strange words, child—and where you picked them up is, I am sure, quite a marvel to me—I'll tell you a story of how Aunt Georgey herself once saved her life, entirely through having learned the deaf and dumb alphabet: shall I?'

'Instead of the lesson, Aunt Georgey? O yes, I should like it better than pie.'

'There were two little boys, Dickey, and one of them not very much older than you, who used to come and stay with your Uncle Frank—you never saw him, dear child, did you? Ah, he would have liked those bonny blue eyes!—to stay with your Uncle Frank and me, when we were first married; and they could neither hear nor speak, Dickey.'

'Couldn't they eat neither, Aunt Georgey, nor drink, nor nothing?'

'O yes; they were only deaf and dumb; but that is a very dreadful misfortune indeed, my child, of itself. They could not talk except with their fingers —so—only ever so much quicker.'

'That ain't talking; that's cat's cradle, Aunt Georgey!'

'No, it isn't; it's speech, though there are no words. I said then—"Dickey, don't interrupt your aunt with foolish observations."'

'I didn't hear you, then,' replied Dickey.

'Perhaps not, my dear, but nevertheless I did say it; so don't. Your Uncle Frank and I learned this foreign alphabet on purpose, that we might understand what these two poor lads had to say. They were far quicker, far cleverer than you, Dick; they could read and write, ay, and draw and sew, and do many other things which you would make but a very bad hand at.'

'Could they do the multiplication table, Aunt Georgey?'

'Yes, child.'

'Could they play at "Tit, tat, toe," Aunt Georgey?'

'Yes; and at draughts, and backgammon, and chess, and at fox and geese, as well as any boys. They could almost see what we said, though they could not hear, with such quick eager eyes did they watch every movement of our lips. We soon, however, got to talk as easily with our fingers as our tongues; and sometimes, when the lads were not with us, Uncle Frank and I used to converse in that manner when we were alone, for practice.

'It happened upon one occasion that he had to go to London on important business; he was to have gone by an afternoon train, but something delayed him, so that he was not able to leave before the night-express. I was not in very good health, and retired to my bedroom about two hours before his departure; he promised, however, to come up and wish me good-bye before he started, which would be between twelve and one o'clock in the morning. The matter which called him away was connected with the bank here, which had just been burned down; and my husband, it seems, though I did not know it at the time—so great a secret had he endeavoured to keep it—had many thousand pounds belonging to the concern in his temporary possession, locked up in the iron safe in our bedroom, where the plate was kept. He was bank-manager, and responsible for the whole of it. It was winter-time, and there was a fire in the room, so bright and comfortable that I was in no hurry to leave it and get into bed, but sat up, looking into the fiery coals, as I have seen you do, Dickey, and thinking about all sorts of things; not so much about your favourite palaces, and fairy gardens, and the castles which Jack the Giant-killer took, that are to be seen there, doubtless, as you say; but upon the long journey your Uncle Frank had to take that night, and of how dreary the days would seem until he returned; and in particular how lonely I should feel in that great room all by myself, when he would be away; for I was a dreadful coward, Dickey, and not like you, who go to sleep in the dark like a brave boy, and never want a nursemaid to sit in your room. It was a little after eleven o'clock when I got into bed, but I did not feel the least inclined for sleep even then; I knew Uncle Frank would be coming to wish me good-bye presently, and besides, there seemed to be all sorts of noises about the room, which my foolish ears always used to hear whenever I was alone at night-time.

'If a little soot fell down the chimney, it was, I thought, a great black crow at least, which would soon be flying about the room, and settling on my pillow, if a mouse squeaked in the wainscot, it was the creaking of some dreadful person's shoes, coming upstairs to kill your silly old aunt with a carving-knife; and if the wind blew at the casement, it was somebody else trying to get in at the window, although it was two stories high. You may imagine, then, my horror when I heard a tremendous sneeze within a quarter of an inch of me, just behind the head-board of the bed, and between that and the wall, where there was a considerable space. I had, as usual, taken the precaution, before I put the candle out, of looking everywhere in the room where it was quite impossible any person could be hid; but in the little alcove into which the bed was pushed I had never so much as thought of looking, although that was a capital hiding-place for anybody. Ever since I had slept in that room, in short, I had been like the ostrich of whom we read yesterday, Dickey, who puts his head in the sand, and then imagines himself in perfect security. I had piqued myself upon precautionary measures that, after all, might just as well have been omitted. The only thing, as I believe, which saved my reason from departing altogether, when I first heard that terrible sound, was that my mind clung to the hope that it might be, after all, only the sneeze of a cat. Fifty cats together could not have made half such a disturbance, it is true, for it was the sneeze of a man who sneezes in spite of himself, and almost shook the house; but the idea sustained me over the first shock. The next instant, the wretch had sneezed again, and pushing aside the bed, which rolled on casters, I felt was standing beside my pillow looking at me. If he had only given one sneeze, he might perhaps have believed me, as I lay quite still, breathing as regularly as I could, and pretending to be asleep; but he reasoned, very justly, that, unless I was deaf or dead, I must have been awakened by the second.

"You 're awake, marm," said he, in a gruff voice, "and it 's no use shamming! If you don't want a tap with this life-preserver, just look alive."

'I opened my eyes exceedingly wide at this, and beheld a man with crape over his face, standing by the bed; he held a sort of club with two knobs upon it in his right hand, and with his left he pointed to the iron safe. "Is the money there?" said he.

"The plate is," said I, in a trembling voice; "pray, take it, sir; I am sure you are very welcome;" for he might have had everything of value out of the house with all my heart, so long as he left me my life.

"The money—the gold—the notes, are they there?" cried he again, in a terrible sort of whisper.

"It 's all there," replied I, although I knew nothing about it; "all except fifteen-and-sixpence in my purse, on the dressing-table yonder. There 's a silver mustard-pot besides in the pantry, and a couple of candlesticks in the study, only they are plated, for I would not deceive you, sir, upon any account."

"You had better not," observed the burglar grimly, "or it will be all the worse for you." He produced a key like that my husband used, and approached the iron safe; but as he did so, his guilty ear caught a footstep upon the staircase. "Who 's that?" cried he.

"My husband, sir," returned I; "but, pray, don't hurt him; pray."

"Is he not gone to town, then?" cried the ruffian, with an oath of disappointment.

"He is going at twelve o'clock," replied I; "he is indeed."

"If you tell him," said the burglar, hoarsely; "if you breathe but one word of my presence here, it will be the death-doom of you both;" he had slipped into the alcove, and drawn back the bed again to its place, in an instant. My husband entered immediately afterwards, and even while he was in the room, I heard the awful threat repeated once again through the thick curtain behind me: "If you do but whisper it, woman, I will kill you where you lie. Will you swear not to tell him?"

"I will," said I solemnly; "I promise not to open my lips about the matter."

'Your Uncle Frank leaned over the pillow to kiss me, and observed how terrified I looked.

"You have been frightening yourself about robbers again, I suppose, you silly child."

"Not I, Frank," returned I, as cheerfully as I could; "I have only a little headache;" but I said with my fingers, so that he could plainly read it in the firelight: "*For God's sake, hush; but there is a man behind the bedhead!*"

'Your Uncle Frank was as bold as a lion, and had nerves like iron, although he was so tender-hearted and kind. He only answered: "Where is your sal-volatile, dearest?" and went to the mantel-piece to get it. I thought he never could have understood me, he spoké with such coolness and unconcern, until I saw his fingers reply as he took up the bottle: "*All right; don't be afraid!*" And then I was not afraid, Dick, or at least not much; for I knew that I should not be left one instant in that room alone; and I felt that my Frank was a match for any two men in such a cause. Only he had no weapon. "*He has a life-preserver,*" said I with my fingers.

"Your fire is getting rather low, Georgey," observed he as he took up the poker. (Ah, he had a weapon then!) "I must leave you a good blaze to comfort you before I go." He poked the fire, and left the poker in, but without ever taking his eye off me and the bedhead. "I will just ring the bell, and see whether Thomas has got the portmanteau ready. Mary," continued he to the maid that answered the bell, "send Thomas up." Then, when she had gone upon that errand: "By Jove! I never gave him that key; where is it, Georgey? I have not a minute to lose; if it is in your dressing-case with the rest there, I shall be an age in looking for it. Might I ask you to get out of bed for an instant, and shew me which it is?" He said with his fingers, "*jump!*" and I jumped you may be sure, Dickey, quickly enough, and was inside the dressing-room, and with the door locked, in half a second.

"Come in, Thomas," said your uncle; "come in:" for Thomas was modestly hesitating at the chamber-door; "there 's some blackguard got into the house and behind my bed there: if he makes the least resistance, I 'll kill him with this hot poker."

'At these words the bed was pushed slowly outwards, and the burglar, without his crape-mask, and with a face as pale as ashes, emerged from his hiding-place. Your Uncle Frank knew him at once as having been a bank-messenger, who had been turned out of his situation, since the fire, upon suspicion of dishonesty.

"O sir, have pity upon me," cried he; "I'm an unlucky dog. If it had not been for a sneeze, I should have had ten thousand pounds in my pocket by this time!"

"Oh, you came after *that*, did you?" said my husband coolly. "Well; please to give up that life-preserver which you have in your pocket, before we have any more conversation."

"And did your lady tell you that, too?" cried the villain, in accents of astonishment, as he delivered up the weapon to the man-servant; "and yet I stood by her yonder, and never heard her utter a syllable."

"I never spoke a word," cried I, through the dressing-room keyhole, for I did not wish the man to think that I had broken my oath; nor, to say truth, was I anxious to make a deadly enemy of him, in case he should be ever at large again.

"Then it 's a judgment on me," exclaimed the miserable wretch; "and it 's no good for me to fight against it."

"It 's not the least good," replied your Uncle Frank decisively; "and we will go to the police-office at once."

'So off the burglar went in their custody, leaving poor Aunt Georgey safe and sound after all.—And now, don't you think there may be some use in learning everything, even so small a thing as the deaf and dumb alphabet, Dickey?'

'Sometimes,' replied the small boy, cautiously, and not wishing to commit himself to the general question.

'It actually saved my life, you see,' continued the old lady; 'and I didn't break my promise, either, did I, Dickey? I said I wouldn't speak a word, and I didn't; for what I did was what I call speech without words.'

'Oh,' replied the small boy, cunningly, 'that's what you call it, is it? Now, should you like to know what *I* call it?'

'Yes, you funny child, I should,' replied his aunt, admiringly.

'Well, Aunt Georgey,' said the youthful moralist, as he slipped off Minerva's lap with a wicked laugh, '*I* should call it acting a fib without telling one; and a precious big fib too!'

THE MARTYR OF TOULOUSE.

A CENTURY ago, Toulouse counted among its citizens an honest, industrious draper, who for forty years had carried on a respectable business in the Grande Rue des Filetiers. Jean Calas was the head of a happy household, consisting of himself, his wife —who was eighteen years his junior—four sons, and two daughters. He was a Calvinist, but, notwithstanding that age of religious fanaticism, his Protestantism was so little tinged with bigotry, that for three-and-twenty years he had reckoned among his family as an attached and devoted servant, Jeanne Viguier, whose zealous Catholicism had made a convert of his third son. Respected by his co-religionists, and beloved by his friends, Calas pursued the noiseless tenor of his way, little dreaming, at the ripe age of sixty-four, to become the hero of as sad a tragedy as ever stained the too tragic page of his country's history.

In 1761, Marc-Antoine, the eldest of the sons, having taken his degree at the university, returned home to seek admission at the bar. At that time, it was necessary for candidates for the legal profession to obtain a certificate of Catholicism, usually signed as a matter of form. To the surprise and chagrin of young Calas, the curé of the parish refused to endorse the certificate. Baffled in his desire to escape from an occupation he detested, Marc-Antoine became low-spirited, melancholy, and morose. He withdrew from his associates, and kept apart as much as possible from the family circle, solacing his solitary hours with Plutarch and Montaigne, upon whose palliations of suicide he was often heard to approvingly comment.

On the 13th of October in the above year, a M. La Vaisse, arriving suddenly from Bordeaux, found that his father and mother had gone into the country. Unable to obtain a conveyance to follow them, he called upon Jean Calas, who invited him to stay supper. The meal passed off very pleasantly. As soon as it was over, Marc-Antoine went into the kitchen; surprised at his leaving the rest, the servant asked him if he was cold; he replied: 'No, I am burning hot.' The others shortly afterwards retired to another room, where they spent the evening in friendly conversation, during which Pierre Calas fell asleep, for which breach of politeness he was laughingly upbraided when roused upon the departure of the guest. He rose to accompany the latter down stairs. When they reached the bottom, La Vaisse remarked that the door between the passage and the shop was open. Suspecting some intruder might be hiding there, Pierre stepped in and saw the body of a man suspended by the neck against the door between the shop and the room behind it. To his horror, he recognised the corpse of his brother. The unhappy suicide had placed a long piece of wood across the folding-door, and hung himself by a cord with a running-knot. Hearing Pierre's cries for help, his father ran down stairs, took down the body, placed it on the floor, unfastened the rope, and despatched Pierre and La Vaisse to the nearest surgeon. Unable to find him, they returned with his assistant, but it was too late; the work of the suicide had been done too effectually. Distracted as he was, the first thought of Jean Calas was to save his son's memory being stigmatised and the family disgraced, and he enjoined that the fact that Marc-Antoine having died by his own hand should be kept secret. Madame Calas, alarmed by the noise, after a time ventured down stairs to ascertain the cause, but was stopped by La Vaisse, who persuaded her to return; she then sent Jeanne to find out the meaning of the cries, whisperings, and movements that reached her ears. The servant not coming back, she ran down stairs again, and beheld her son stretched upon the ground. Thinking he had fainted, she fetched a bottle of *Reine de Hongrie*, and tried to revive him, refusing to believe the assurances of the surgeon that her efforts were thrown away—that it was indeed the dead body of her eldest born she held in her arms.

While this sad scene was being enacted within the house, a crowd had gathered outside, staring at the closed door and darkened windows, as if to read therein a confirmation of the wild speculations hazarded among them. At last, some good Catholic, remembering the draper was a heretic, suggested that Marc-Antoine had been murdered by his father, to prevent him adopting the true faith. In a moment the baseless supposition of a brainless bigot became the conviction of a mob. The terrible tale flew through the streets of Toulouse that October night with fatal speed, and roused up David de Beaudrigue from his slumbers. This over-zealous, over-officious, passionate, unscrupulous magistrate soon arrived with his police at the house of Calas. Pierre, who had remained in the shop with his dead brother, was immediately arrested. Without executing any of the proper legal formalities, without making any examination of the premises, Beaudrigue ordered the corpse to be carried to the Hôtel de Ville, and arrested Calas, his wife and children, La Vaisse, Jeanne Viguier, and also a friend who had hurried to the place on hearing the news. In vain did a colleague attempt to restrain the magistrate's impetuosity; the latter replied: 'I take all the responsibility upon myself; it is the cause of religion.' Pierre Calas, who, like the rest, supposed they were merely going to depose to the facts of the suicide, was about to leave a candle burning against their return, when David told him he need not take the trouble, as they would not be at home so soon as all that.

The inquiry before the Consistorial Court was consistent throughout. The prisoners, kept in close confinement, were debarred all communication with their friends. There was no public trial; they were examined separately and secretly; and only allowed to answer such questions as the judges chose to propose. Louis Calas, the sole Catholic member of the family, and the two daughters, alone employed an advocate, who vainly attempted to stay the proceedings. His advocacy cost him dear; he was obliged to publicly apologise for having taken up the case, and was suspended from his functions for three months. After this, no lawyer would assist them, and even the officers of the court refused to present the memorials drawn up in their behalf. Some thirty witnesses were examined without any criminatory results, but Beaudrigue was not to be baffled. Recourse was had to the issuing of a monitory—a statement of presumed facts upon which testimony was required—read from the various pulpits by the curés, threatening with excommunication any persons having knowledge of the circumstances by *hearsay* or otherwise, unless they disclosed what they knew either to the magistrates or the priest of their parish; and with daring defiance of justice and the law, the monitory was so worded as to call forth only witnesses for the prosecution. Voluntary testimony not being receivable by the court, the accused were thus deprived of all chance of proving their innocence.

By these means a mass of suspicions, hearsays, and reports were accumulated of a similar nature to the following: 'One Lagreye, a tailor, deposes that he was informed by one Bonnemaison, that he had been told that a workman of Caraman had said that there was nothing extraordinary in the matter, for five or six people had been served in the same way at Caraman.' In the same fashion it was proved that on the morning of the 13th of October, the murder of Marc-Antoine Calas had been resolved upon at an assembly of Protestants. This was enough to satisfy the court that the Calvinists considered assassination a virtue when employed to prevent conversion, and to warrant the deduction that Jean Calas, aided by his wife, his son Pierre, La Vaisse, and Jeanne Viguier, had strangled his eldest son. The including of the maid-servant in the charge was rather awkward, as she was too well-known as a zealous Catholic, who had won over one of the family from heresy, to render it likely she should join in such a deed; still, to release her was out of the question, because she would have proved that she had never quitted the father or mother from the commencement of supper to the discovery of the body.

Even this was not thought sufficient to insure the destruction of these victims of fanaticism. It was necessary further to excite the feelings of the faithful. To this end, a public funeral was decreed to the suicide, who was accordingly carried to his grave with all the pomp and ceremonial of the Catholic ritual, and attended by the society of 'White Penitents,' who pretended that the martyred Marc-Antoine had purposed joining their community.

On the 18th of November, Jean Calas, his wife, and Pierre were sentenced to the rack, and La Vaisse and Jeanne Viguier to be presented—that is, merely attached to the instrument of torture and interrogated. They appealed to the parliament of Toulouse, the second supreme court of justice in France. Before their new judges, they were assisted by the experience, judgment, and eloquence of M. Sudre, but without avail. The court was resolved to find the prisoners guilty, and the advocate's courageous appeals only resulted in ruining himself. Seven out of thirteen judges voted for death; but the law requiring a majority of the fifteen who formed the court, the senior judge, out of deference to the wishes of his colleagues, transferred his vote, and on the 9th of March 1762, Jean Calas was condemned: firstly, to the question ordinary and extraordinary, in order to make him admit his guilt; secondly, to be drawn in his shirt from the prison to the cathedral, at the grand entrance of which he was to go down on his knees, and, holding a wax-candle weighing two pounds in his hand, ask pardon of God, his majesty, and the laws; thirdly, to be taken to the Place St Georges, stretched upon a wheel, and have his arms, legs, thighs, and ribs broken by the executioner; lastly, to be laid upon his back, with his face towards heaven, 'to live as long as it shall please God to give him life, in pain and repentance for his crimes and misdemeanours, and to serve as an example of terror to other evil-doers.'

The atrocious sentence was carried out the next day in all its horrid details. Calas bore all heroically. The torture of the rack elicited only an asseveration of innocence. A single cry of anguish escaped his lips as the executioner gave the first blow of the eleven; he endured the remainder, each of which broke a bone, in silence. Stretched out at length, mangled and broken, this old man of sixty-four lingered for two hours in agony, when Beaudrigue, who had been watching the sufferings of his victim, bent over him and exclaimed: 'Wretch, you have but one moment to live; confess the truth!' Too weak to speak, Calas dumbly declared his innocence, and the executioner released him from his misery. His endurance bore good fruit: it saved his family from a like fate. The procureur-général demanded the execution of Pierre, Madame Calas, and La Vaisse, and perpetual imprisonment for Jeanne Viguier; but the *capitouls*, either satisfied with the blood of Jean Calas, or having some latent doubts as to his guilt, contented themselves with banishing Pierre Calas from France, and acquitted the others. Madame Calas, with her daughters and her faithful servant, retired into the country, seeking in the consolations of religion and time a lightening of the burden of affliction.

A Marseille merchant had been a horrified and indignant witness of the execution of Calas; he firmly believed in his innocence, and, passing through Geneva on his way home, acquainted Voltaire with the details and his convictions. That inveterate foe of ecclesiastical tyranny resolved to probe the affair to the bottom. Whichever story was true, told equally against religious bigotry, and would so far repay his labour. He set about his self-imposed task with characteristic vigour, bringing all the resources at his command to bear upon it. Assuming at one time the innocence, at another, the guilt of Calas, he corresponded with Catholics and Protestants. He took Donat Calas, the youngest of the sons, who had taken refuge in Geneva, into his house, and thus obtained a knowledge of the habits and dispositions of the various members of the family. Pierre, after escaping from a monastery, into which he had been entrapped, also fled to that city. Voltaire placed him under a species of espionage. The result of his observations was, a thorough conviction of the falsity of the charge upon which Jean Calas had been executed, and a determination not to rest till the infamous sentence of the parliament of Toulouse was revoked.

The first step was to draw Madame Calas from her retirement without the Catholics knowing anything about it. She reached Paris alone, and was there joined by La Vaisse under an assumed name. In the capital, she soon was surrounded by friends willing to help her, while Voltaire at a distance directed and guided all. Knowing he would have the whole power of the church to contend with, he was careful not to rouse it too soon. 'Consider,' says he, in one of his letters, 'that there are plenty of folks quite ready to say, "What signifies it if a Calvinist has been beaten to death? the state counts one enemy the less!" Depend upon it, many a good, simple ecclesiastic thinks in this way. We must stop their mouths by a mild exposition of the reasonable side of Protestantism, that will still give Catholic proselytisers hope of successfully practising their calling.' The open opposition of enemies, the lukewarmness of friends, the dilatoriness of officials, and the unsuspected adverse influence of a powerful minister, had all to succumb before the perseverance of the poet. Four months after the execution of Calas, the first step towards reparation was made by an order from the Conseil d'Etat for a review of the whole case. It became the topic of the day—all classes sympathised with the poor widow: the chancellor assured her that her business engaged all their thoughts, and nobles offered consolation to the draper's relict. The inquiry dragged its slow length along for another year, when the decree of the Toulouse parliament was quashed, and a new trial ordered, t the intense indignation of the legal functionaries o that place. They regretted that they had spared any of the heretics, and consoled themselves by charging exorbitantly for every document required, and by availing themselves of the archbishop's gracious permission to hear mass at their own houses o Sunday.

The new trial took place before the *Maîtres des Requêtes de l'Hôtel au Souverain*, consisting of forty judges The whole of the evidence was gone through again witnesses were examined in behalf of the accused and after six long sittings, the former sentence was annulled, and Jean Calas, on the third anniversary o his execution, proclaimed to have died an innocent man. Madame Calas received a compensation from the public funds, and subscription lists were opened throughout Europe. These funds, however, were exhausted, and yet legal creditors remained unsatisfied, spite of the efforts of Voltaire and his friends; and it was left to the National Convention, in 1792, to relieve the family from the incumbrance, and make all possible amends for the sufferings they had so undeservingly undergone.

There is some satisfaction in knowing that the author of all this misery did not escape retribution. In 1765, David de Beaudrigue was dismissed from his office, and became the object of public detestation. His mind gave way; by night and day he was haunted by visionary gibbets, wheels, racks, and dying men. In a paroxysm, he threw himself out of a window, but escaped death, and was placed under strict surveillance. He one day succeeded in eluding the vigilance of his keepers, sprang out of the window a second time, and died with the name of Calas on his lips.

EMERSON TENNENT'S CEYLON.

No one will expect that we should present anything like a regular or critical notice of Sir J. Emerson Tennent's account of Ceylon,[*] which may be considered to be the principal book that has appeared this season, and which will doubtless henceforth enjoy a place in every respectable library, in companionship with the celebrated work of Bishop Heber on India. All we can pretend to do is, merely to direct the attention of readers to one of those rare productions, which, uniting instruction with the most genial feeling, is in a high degree entertaining, without being disfigured by that flippant jocularity which now tinges so much of our descriptive literature.

Concerned in the government of Ceylon some ten years ago, the author of the valuable work before us has possessed ample means, as well as erudition and good taste, to produce by far the most complete account of this remarkable island which has ever appeared. Ceylon—the Serendib of the Arabian tales—the centre of Buddhism, and the garden of India, passed under various eastern dynasties, till it successively became a conquest of the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English. For the first time, while under British rule, did this singularly picturesque and productive territory shew symptoms of advancement in the arts of civilisation. Not that it does not in many places exhibit ruins of magnificent cities, temples, and palaces, along with an infinite number of decayed tanks for irrigation on a stupendous scale—the whole demonstrating that in early times, enormous wealth had been lavished by native princes on works of luxury, and even of utility. But, as on the mainland of India, the ruin of much that was elegant and useful followed in the train of internal wars that were carried on for the sake of some barbaric ascendency. When the Portuguese, about 1520, effected a conquest of Ceylon, no thought was taken of its ancient works of art. On taking possession of the island, they began a system almost unexampled in the annals of rapacity, bigotry, and cruelty—the more abhorrent, that it was conducted on the pretence of christianising the unfortunate natives. Unable to bear this tyranny any longer, the Cingalese, about 1638, invited the Dutch to rid them of their tormentors; but successful in this project, they found that they had exchanged only one form of oppression for another. No longer tortured on the score of religion, they were remorselessly ground down by monopolies and fiscal exactions—the Dutch, in all their conquests, having in view the single object of making money. Ceylon was finally ceded to the English—having been taken possession of by them during the French revolutionary war—by the treaty of Amiens in 1802. This cession, indeed, still left the small interior kingdom of Kandy to be acquired; but that also sunk under British rule, and since 1815, the whole island has been a colony of the crown. The relics bequeathed by its successive masters are said to be nationally characteristic. The Portuguese left forts and Roman Catholicism, while the Hollanders gave the Roman-Dutch law, along with trim gardens and painted villas of the true Netherlandish pattern. Of the languages of the two invading powers, that of the Portuguese alone survives in the corrupted vernacular of the middle classes in the chief towns.

An immediate result of the English rule was, the making of roads through the trackless jungles and across the hitherto inaccessible groups of hills; such, as is well known, being an indispensable preparation for every improvement, commercial and social. The great road-maker of Ceylon was Sir Edward Barnes, who became governor in 1820. By his orders, roads unsurpassed in excellence, 'reaching an altitude of more than six thousand feet above the sea,' were carried through the heart of the island; 'rocks were pierced, precipices scarped, and torrents bridged, to effect the passage; and the Kandyans, when the task was accomplished, recalled the memory of ancient prophecy, and felt that now the conquest of their country was complete.' Besides these vast improvements, 'civil organisation has since been matured with equal success, domestic slavery has been abolished, religious disqualifications removed, compulsory labour abandoned, a charter of justice promulgated, a legislative council established, trading monopolies extinguished, commerce encouraged in its utmost freedom, and the mountain forests felled to make way for plantations of coffee, whose exuberant produce is already more than sufficient for the consumption of the British empire.'

During the occupancy of the Portuguese and Dutch, a tax was imposed on the fish caught on the coast of Ceylon, which, as at variance with the principles of political economy, the British commuted into a licence on boats, and finally abolished in 1840. Strangely enough, every diminution of the duty led to a decline in the quantity of fish caught, and the price of the article correspondingly increased. This is offered as a striking illustration of the unchanging habits of an eastern people, who, wanting the stimulus of a tax on their labour, sunk into apathy. Those among them who were Roman Catholics, did not feel happy till their church, for its own behoof, exacted a fish-tax equal to what the government had remitted. It is mentioned as a remarkable coincidence, that the remission of a fish-tax at Lisbon led to precisely similar results; and that when the duty was reimposed, the supply of fish to the market became regular and abundant. Whether the English in India and Ceylon would act quite wisely in applying what we should call a constitutional policy to ignorant and superstitious races, who are governed by traditions and notions of caste, may be judged of by this curious instance of popular stupidity. The spirit of caste alone is enough to defeat the most humane intentions of the legislature. Trial by jury, for example, seems hardly possible in a country where masses of the people entertain such a horror of each other, that they will not come within so much as a speaking-distance.

We confess, that until we read the present account of Ceylon, we did not imagine there was anything half so frightful as the degraded condition of a tribe called the Rodiyas. Nominally improved in status on account of the government recognising no distinction in caste, this unhappy people are still at the base of the social scale. Under the Kandyan kings, they did not venture to build a hut, but lived in caves; if benighted, they dared not to lie down in a shed with other travellers; they could enter no court of justice nor temple, but were obliged to 'stand afar off;' they could communicate with the rest of the human race only through the common jailer; and the most dreaded punishment of a high-caste offender was to hand over his wife to the Rodiyas, who adopted her by taking betel from their mouth and placing it in hers, 'after which, till death, her degradation was indelible.' We are told that they are now a shade less servile, yet instinctively crouch to their traditionary degradation. 'They fall on their knees with uplifted hands to address a man of the lowest recognised caste; and they shout on the approach of a traveller, to warn him to stop till they can get off the road, and allow him to pass without the risk of too close proximity to their persons.' In their habits they are filthy; their labour is of the vilest kind; they are stigmatised as thieves; and the character of their women is disreputable. The degradation of the race reaches to their very cattle, 'which require to be distinguished by a coco-nut shell suspended from the neck by a leathern cord.' Low as this people are, they hold in scorn two tribes, as being lower still. These are 'the Ambetteyos, or barbers, and the Hanomoreyos, or betel-box makers of Oova, who are looked on as so vile that no human being would touch rice that had been cooked in their houses; and the Rodiyas, on the occasion of festivals, tie up their dogs to prevent them prowling in search of food to the dwellings of these wretches.' All we can hope is, that in time, though it may be ages hence, the constant experience of equality before the law, and the preaching of Christianity, will eradicate these various social hatreds.

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[*] 2 vols. 8vo. London, Longmans.

Interesting as are details of this nature, the principal charm of Sir J. Emerson Tennent's book consists in his exquisitely felicitous descriptions of scenery and objects in natural history. All that the imagination can picture must fall immeasurably short of the gorgeous beauty of vegetation in Ceylon, as well as of the overpowering abundance and variety of its animal life. 'In its peculiar style of beauty, nothing in the world can exceed in loveliness the road from Point de Galle to Colombo; it is literally an avenue of palms, nearly seventy miles long, with a rich undergrowth of tropical trees, many of them crimson with flowers, and overrun with orchids and climbing plants, whose tendrils descend in luxuriant festoons. Birds of gaudy plumage dart amidst the branches, gay butterflies hover over the shady foliage, and insects of metallic lustre glitter on the leaves. Bright green lizards dash over the banks and ascend the trees, and the hideous but harmless iguano [large lizard], half familiar with man, moves slowly across the high road, out of the way of the traveller's carriage, and hisses as it retreats to allow him to pass. Arboured in the shades of these luxuriant groves, nestle the white cottages of the natives, each with its garden of coco-nuts and plantains; and in the suburbs of the numerous villages, some of the more ambitious dwellings, built on the model of the old Dutch villas, are situated in tiny compounds, enclosed by dwarf walls and lines of acacias.'

In describing a day in the jungle, we are introduced to the animals which come forth successively from their haunts from sunrise to dewy eve: First, the leopards and jackals steal back to the shade of the forest; then are seen the dancing clouds of butterflies, of every shape and hue, along with the gay humming-birds which hover over the newly opened flowers; 'the jungle cock shouts his reveillé;' the bronze-winged pigeons murmur their cry through the woods; hawks and falcons, on furtive errands, sweep through the sky; and squirrels dart merrily about among the bushes. Towards noon, animal life is stilled, and a deathlike silence prevails; the buffaloes and elephants have immersed themselves in tanks and mud-baths: 'the cattle pant in their stifling sheds; and the dogs lie prone upon the ground, their legs extended far in front and behind, as if to bring the utmost portion of their body into contact with the cool earth.' When evening approaches, insects, birds, and beasts recover their animation; 'the traveller recommences his suspended journey; and the husbandman, impatient to employ the last hours of fading light, hastens to resume the interrupted labours of the morning.' At last, the creatures of night take the place of those animals which sink to repose; bats, hawk-moths, beetles, and beasts of prey, leave their hidden recesses 'among the grass, already damp with dew; the glowworm lights her emerald lamp; and from the shrubs and bushes issue showers of fire-flies, whose pale green flashes sparkle in the midnight darkness, till day returns, and morning "pales their ineffectual fires."'

Unhappily, amidst these scenes of beauty, man is exposed to a thousand tormentors. Above and below, animal life in an endless variety of forms waits and preys upon him. The mosquitoes of Ceylon are said to be the most adroit and audacious of their kind: but we learn that mosquitoes, and even snakes, are not to be compared, as plagues, with a species of leeches. Think of living under the necessity of watching lest leeches make an unauthorised attack on your feet and ankles! The Ceylon land-leech is a thin spare creature about two inches long, and so nimble and flexible as to be able to insinuate itself up the legs and beneath the clothing as high as the throat. They do not crawl in the manner of our innocent medical leech, but plant themselves on one end like a nail sticking out of the ground, and in that attitude watch for their prey. When disposed to move, they arch their body so as to bring the upper extremity to the earth, and advance on the two points by semicircular strides. Walking with amazing rapidity, they attack man and horse with equal audacity. Laying first hold of the foot, they ascend the dress in search of an aperture to reach the skin. In travelling through the jungle, hosts of them may be seen on the roadsides, waiting erect for their victims, and lurking in the grass. They make cattle their especial prey. It happens, says our author, 'that those persons in the rear of a party of travellers invariably fare worst, as the leeches, warned of their approach, congregate with singular celerity. Their size is so insignificant, and the wound they make is so skilfully punctured, that both are generally imperceptible, and the first intimation of their onslaught is the trickling of the blood, or a chill feeling of the leech when it begins to hang heavily on the skin from being distended by its repast. Horses are driven wild by them, and stamp the ground in fury to shake them from their fetlocks, to which they hang in bloody tassels. The bare legs of the palanquin-bearers and coolies are a favourite resort; their hands being too much engaged to be spared to pull them off, the leeches hang like bunches of grapes round their ankles; and I have seen the blood literally flowing over the edge of a European's shoe from their innumerable bites. In healthy constitutions, the wounds, if not irritated, generally heal, occasioning no other inconvenience than a slight inflammation and itching; but in those with a bad state of body, the punctures, if rubbed, are liable to degenerate into ulcers, which may lead to the loss of the limb or life.' The coffee-planters, we are told, wear 'leech-gaiters,' to protect themselves, as far as possible, from these cunning and bloodily disposed reptiles.

To afford an agreeable shelter from the blazing heat of the sun, the Dutch considerately planted trees in the streets of Galle and Colombo; but in adopting this precaution they did not probably foresee that they were furnishing a resort to a kind of green caterpillar, which drops down on the passenger, and darts into him a proboscis more acute than the point of a needle, and more lasting in its effects than the sting of 'a nettle or a star-fish.' Looking up to the point whence the marauder has descended on its fine silken filament, the unfortunate wayfarer observes clusters of the enemy, 'amounting to hundreds, clinging to the branches and the bark, with a few straggling over the leaves, or suspended from them by lines. These pests are so annoying to children, as well as destructive to the foliage, that it is often necessary to singe them off the trees by a flambeau raised on the extremity of a pole.'

The attempt to shut out the pest of animal life from the houses is, of course, hopeless; because, for the sake of air, doors and windows are formed of Venetian jalousies opening to the ground. Taking advantage of the openings in these slight defences, a variety of 'snakes, lizards, and scorpions' make free to enter the rooms, and take up their residence in the ceilings. Even if you make somewhat cool cellars, these are not safe from intrusion; they afford places of resort to centipedes, which bite those who meddle with their nests, and also harbour huge spiders that are equal in dimensions to 'an ordinary sized breakfast-plate.' One day, a servant complained to Sir J. Emerson Tennent that he had been bit between the thumb and forefinger by one of these cellar-spiders, 'when lifting a bottle in the dark.' But the poor man was thought to have made a mistake; the bite more probably being inflicted by a centipede or a scorpion. Our author seems to think that this species of spider is rather a traduced animal. It makes a comfortable dwelling for its domestic use, not for entangling prey, and 'shuns all descriptions of food except soft insects and annelides.' A lady declared to him, however, that she had seen one of these ugly spiders devour a small house-lizard. It would almost appear as if animated nature was constantly waging war on the inanimate. Every substance that can by a possibility be eaten, is exposed to the incessant attacks of insects. From the effects of the humid monsoons, there is a prevalence of damp, which, with the heat of the climate, causes decay in furniture, books, and other articles. Libraries decompose and rapidly cease to exist. When the books begin to fall in pieces, they are hurried to destruction by hordes of acari, against which no precautions can be taken. The timbers of a house are similarly exposed to the attacks of white ants, which perambulate about in myriads, and lurk in every crevice.

The black ants that are met with in the rural districts inflict a different variety of torment. In travelling, Sir J. E. Tennent speaks of having gone to bed in his tent, and been awakened by a violent smarting on his face and neck, from which he pulled off handfuls of insects, that were biting him intolerably. 'On starting from my bed,' he observes, 'my feet and ankles were instantly assailed. The tent was dark, but obtaining a light from the watch-fire, I found myself covered with large black ants, each half an inch long, and furnished with powerful mandibles. In one of their migrations, a colony of these fierce creatures had approached my tent in a stream of four or five feet in breadth, and composed of myriads of individuals. They had made their way under the canvas of the tent; and on finding my bed in the line of their march, had held on their course, as their custom is, directly across it, descending again to the floor of the tent, and streaming out at the opposite side into the jungle. My pillow and sheets were literally black with their numbers. In their onslaught, however, they use only their mandibles, and bite without infusing any venom into the wound, which does not inflame like the bite of the hill-ant at home.'

Into houses and tents the cobra da capello and other snakes make free to enter, and need to be diligently watched for. One night, as we are informed, a person while in bed felt something move beneath the pillow, which proved to be a snake with its young. A lady, on opening her piano, was surprised to see what she thought was a walking-stick lying on the keys; it was only a snake, which had found an entrance to the instrument. A minor pest, but still one not to be disregarded, is the fly. So enormously large are the swarms of flies in some places, that on getting into a room at night, they overpower and put out the lights. Rooms in which parties are to assemble are kept, as far as possible, close and dark until the guests arrive; and then, in order to call off the attention of the flies, fires are lighted on the lawn outside. The faculty of flies, as well as of vultures, for discovering a dead body, is spoken of as marvellous in the extreme. In the course of a hunt for elephants, one of these animals died from wounds and exhaustion, and almost instantly it was covered with myriads of black flies, which had nowhere been seen a few moments before. 'Ants exhibit an instinct equally surprising. I have sometimes covered up a particle of refined sugar with paper in the centre of a polished table, and counted the number of minutes which would elapse before it was fastened on by the small black ants of Ceylon, and a line formed to lower it safely to the floor. Here was a substance which, to our apprehension at least, is altogether inodorous; and yet the quick sense of smell must have been the only conductor of the ants.' Fishes in India, travelling overland in quest of water, are guided by similar instinct; 'and even when captured, and laid on the floor of a room, their efforts to escape are always towards the same point.' How many are the mysteries in nature, of which men of science can give no proper explanation!

Had space permitted, we should have gladly noticed the rapid spread of coffee-plantations and other evidences of prosperity, and also afford some curious particulars respecting the coco-nut and bread-fruit trees. Much that is deeply interesting could also have been given in relation to the religion and manners of the Buddhists, their temples, and the far-famed 'sacred tooth' of the founder of their faith. Our short notice is to be considered only an incentive to peruse these every-way valuable volumes.

MARRIAGE IN LOW LIFE.

A VISIT paid very recently to a clergyman, whose duty lies on the eastern border-land of London, brought some of the peculiarities of marriages in low life very forcibly before us.

The church to which our friend is attached has a reputation for fortunate bridals, and is consequently in favour with the people, who crowd thither, that their vows may be pledged in an auspicious place. It requires some watchfulness on the part of the incumbent to prevent the inhabitants of neighbouring districts from stealing in and claiming his good offices illegally; for it is necessary that one or other of the bridal couple must reside for a fortnight at least in the parish where they wed. The great event is heralded by the 'bans,' or asking in church, for three following weeks; and it appeared to us that an hour scarcely passed at the parsonage without an application being made to that effect. The betrothed pair generally came on this business together; but the woman was invariably speaker on the occasion; the man putting the two-shillings fee into her hand, and then drawing shyly behind her, whilst she gave the names and needful particulars. Her own name is generally given glibly enough, though a little occasional indignation is manifested when asked 'if she is a spinster.' At the man's name, there is a pause. *She does not know it*, and has to apply to him for information—sometimes because his ordinary name of 'Jem' or 'Tom' is alone familiar to her; too frequently, however, because their acquaintance has been too brief for her to learn it! We could scarcely credit, indeed, the thoughtless recklessness and haste with which these people rush into this solemn engagement of matrimony. We were assured that one of the ladies of the parsonage once saw two strangers accost each other in the street; five minutes afterwards, they came to 'put up their bans.' On being asked her lover's name, the girl replied ingenuously, that she had not talked to him many minutes, and did not know! but they *liked one another*. Doubtless, the conjugal horrors which fill police reports may be traced in a great degree to this over-haste to wed.

These couples can never be restrained by the sage counsel of their parish priest. They are generally deaf to remonstrance or reason on the subject, and no other protection from their own wild will can he exercise than that which the merciful interposition of the three weeks' bans affords. Even *this* delay is frequently evaded. A great proportion of the population consists of merchant-seamen, who, having very little time on shore, make the most of it, and almost invariably marry by licence. These men have not progressed with the times, nor to the degree of men-of-war's men, and differ probably but little from the seamen of Blake's age—clinging to many of the old Puritan beliefs in their rude way—but withal generous, brave, and chivalrous to a degree, as a story we shall shortly relate will prove. But before we leave the subject of bans, we must just repeat the following instance of simplicity and amusing ignorance:

By some accident, the lady of the parsonage had to 'take a pair of bans'—that is, to enter them in the book, the clergyman and the proper official for them, the clerk, being both absent. The following dialogue ensued:

'Your name?' The man had come alone in this instance.

'John Gradthum.'

'How do you spell it?'

'Just as your ladyship likes, mum; you'll know a deal better nor I.'

'Are you a bachelor?'

'No, mum.'

'Oh! a widower then?'

'No, mum.'

'But, my good man, you must be either a bachelor or a widower! Have you ever been married before?'

'No, mum—never.'

'Then you are a bachelor.'

'*No, mum*, for I wishes to get married, and'—sheepishly—'I have walked with another young woman before.'

We need scarcely say that this applicant was not a sailor, whose notions of fidelity are less stringent than his chivalrous love for women. One day, a merchant-seaman, rich in pay, and reeling under the effects of his hospitality to his friends, was robbed in the street of his watch and purse. He detected the delinquent, a woman, in the fact, and securing her, transferred her to the custody of a policeman who took her to the station. As they proceeded thither, her tears and cries so disturbed her captor, that he would have induced the policeman to set her at liberty at once; but the man, deaf to bribes and entreaties, refused, vouchsafing the sailor, however, the information, that if he did not appear against her before the magistrate the next morning, she would be set free. This was consolatory; but 'Jack,' dreadfully distressed at having caused pain to a woman, hovered round the police station all night, listening mournfully beneath the barred window to the cries of his prisoner within it. At last day dawned. The magistrate took his seat, and the prisoners of the night were brought before him. As no one appeared against our thievish damsel, she was set free, and found her victim awaiting her outside with a licence of marriage in his hand! He had been very early to the clerk, and fee'd him handsomely to go up to Doctors' Commons for a licence, being himself unable to leave the horrible fascination of the girl's cries; and now he stood waiting to offer her, humbly, his hand and heart, 'because she was a woman, and he had been the cause of her punishment,' as he naïvely explained to the clergyman, who, apprised of the circumstances, endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose, but, as usual, vainly. They were married, and next day poor Jack went to sea. Some two or three years had elapsed, when one morning the clerk was startled by the sudden appearance of this chivalrous worshipper of womankind. He looked pale and sad, and came to proffer double the sum given for his licence to Barker, 'if he would *only get him unmarried again!*'

But the humours of this class of the people are as various as fantastic. We can give an anecdote from the same parish exactly the reverse of the above. One day, a soldier, recently returned from the Crimea, stood before the altar with his bride; but on her name being asked, it was found to differ from that which had been entered in the bans-book. The curate, of course, demurred as to the legality of marrying them, though the bridegroom was very urgent in his entreaties, assuring him that 'it was all right, and that this was the very young woman he wished to have; but the fact was, that he had asked a friend of his to put in the bans, and the man had played him a trick, and given the name of another young woman, with whom he had formerly "walked," instead of the present one.'

The explanation was not judged satisfactory; and he was told that he must either put in the bans again, or go up to Doctors' Commons and procure a licence. The former he could not do; he had to leave England for the Cape on the morrow: about the latter, he hesitated. They had meantime been brought to the parsonage by the curate for his incumbent to decide on the difficulty, and the bride, in a separate apartment, waited his decision. After some time, it was made thus: 'He wouldn't be married at all! He should be obliged to go to the colonel for some money to buy a licence—all the way to Chelsea! and she must go too; and there would be the *grog* there, and the *grog* back again; and it would cost him more than a pound. He didn't care about marrying—not he; he only wanted a wife to wash and starch his master's shirts'—he was an officer's servant—'for when they were in the Crimea, and *he* had had to do them, he had always done them wrong.'

In vain the clerk reminded him of the forsaken bride's feelings, hinting at London Bridge and a probable inquest. He was obdurate; and the clergyman, with feelings of real sympathy, good-naturedly went to break the tidings of her lover's recusancy to the girl. To his surprise, she started briskly from her seat, and replied:

'Well, I'm glad he's made up his mind; and I'm quite agreeable to it. The *Balcarris* is expected every day, and I'd rayther wait for her, and marry Jack Slubbs. I likes a sailor better nor a sodger, after all.' And the pair, meeting amicably in the hall, departed on their several ways.

Easter is *the* marrying season, and very grotesque and strange appearances about that time astonish the clerical eye. A solemn procession of gaily-dressed 'folk' enter by the west door of the church, each bearing a long stick with a thick end, which, as they loiter up the aisle, is gravely put to the lips of the nearest person, reminding one of the Flappers in the island of Laputa. The clerk is, of course, sent to discover the meaning of this strange ceremony—unusual even in that district—and also to bid them lay aside their staves before they enter the chancel. But his speech is interrupted by the foremost person courteously putting the end of his stick to his mouth, and requesting him 'to take a suck of sweets;' whereupon he discovers, to his amazement, that they are sugar-sticks, with which the wedding-guests are interchanging these singular courtesies.

The poor clerk himself is a very high-priest of Hymen, for how, indeed, without him could the rubric be satisfied? He gives away brides by the dozen, being imaginary 'father' to his thousands and tens of thousands; the pew-openers are witnesses; and all do their best to keep the register-book a record of common sense, which, undoubtedly, but for great watchfulness on their part and that of the clergyman, it scarcely could be. In these days of the schoolmaster, the number of 'marks,' instead of signatures, is surprising; and the density manifested about signatures themselves still more so. Frequently, the bridegroom's 'best friend'—when he has one—attempts to put *his* name in the bride's place. One day, a man resolutely refused to let his wife enter her maiden name, declaring that it would be an imposition, as she was Sarah Jennings no longer! and it was long before he could be brought to understand the sense of the proceeding.

Very gay toilets occasionally make these weddings remarkable. White kid gloves being considered essential, but withal expensive purchases for one day's wear only, are hired, and literally passed from hand to hand, as the clergyman learned from one of the wearers. Remonstrating with the man on such extravagance, when even his marriage expenses were being paid by the family, he replied, naïvely: 'We didn't buy 'em, sir; we hired 'em, and you've a seen 'em a many times before.' Sometimes the whole dress is hired, and the poor seamstress flaunts in the old white satin and dirty veil of the West End, or rather, of the sold-off wardrobe of some minor theatre. There is something painful, as well as ludicrous, in such an apparition.

How touching in their simple enjoyments are many of these people! Once, as my husband was signing the parish-register in this very church, the bridegroom—his honest face glowing with the exertion of achieving a signature—whispered, with confidential delight: 'We're agoing to have sausages for dinner to-day, sir!'

Sometimes a labouring-man will leave his toil, and a washerwoman her soap-suds, for the brief period only of pronouncing their nuptial vows, their hands bearing the immediate traces of rude toil when pledged to each other at the altar. These are generally industrious folks, who have no time for idle amusement, and do not make a holiday even of their marriage-morning. In these cases the wooing has probably been longer, and the chances of domestic happiness are generally greater.

Certainly, if the world of the West End require and deserve the lash of a Thackeray on the subject of venal and calculating marriages, the Eastern denizens of the great city require some guidance and instruction on the reverse fault of improvident, rash, and hurried ones, and the great social see-saw is altogether pretty fairly balanced.

WHIP AND SPUR!

The appliances of horsemanship have been the subject of the deepest investigations. Beckmann ferreted out all the little scraps which can be found in Hieronymus, Gruter, Lipsius, Pitiscus, Salmacius, Vossius, Polydore, Montfauçon, Le Beau, and Berenger, illustrative of the manner in which the ancients mounted their horses, and maintained their seats when mounted. He found that no stirrups are observable in ancient coins, statues, or sculptures; that it was part of the duty of the local magistracy, both in Greece and Rome, to provide convenient stepping-stones, or mounting-blocks, at frequent intervals along the roads; that Hippocrates and Galen speak of a disease occasioned by long and frequent riding with the legs pendulous and unsupported; and that Germanicus, the father of Caligula, availed himself of this very pendulosity to strengthen his ankles by riding after dinner.

A single goad or sharp point our industrious investigator also found to be the earliest form of spur. That such spurs were worn by horse-soldiers among the Anglo-Saxons, the Normans, and the Anglo-Normans, is evident from the effigies in the Temple Church. The shanks were afterwards bent to fit the ankle. The rowelled spur is supposed by Sir Samuel Meyrick to have been invented in the reign of Henry III. Spurs were, in the feudal period, frequently decorated with real or fictitious jewels; but these were holiday spurs—for tournaments, and not for the rough usage of war. Spurs of gold were occasionally talked about. During the reigns of Henry V. and his son, spurs with frightfully long spiked rowels were in fashion, and they became longer and longer until they reached the length of eight inches. Henry VIII. set the fashion of a close rowel, shaped somewhat like a star, and much less penetrant and aggravating. Mottoes on the shanks were common in the tournaments of Elizabeth's reign: one which we have read of bore on one side, 'A true knight am I,' and on the other, 'Anger me and try.' Ripon, in the sixteenth century, was famous for its spur-making.

There are some very odd usages connected with spurs. An adventure of an officer of engineers some years ago at Peterborough brought to light many curious particulars with regard to one. He had entered the cathedral with his spurs on, and was immediately surrounded by the choristers demanding 'spur-money.' An appeal to the cathedral dignitaries elicited no information as to the custom; but the subject was taken up in the pages of *Notes and Queries*, and the boys were found to be in the right. But the exaction would seem to have been in use at least as early as 1598. In a book, whose title we have mislaid, published in that year, occurs the following passage: 'Wee think it very necessarye that every quirister sholde bring with him to churche a Testament in Englishe, and turn to every chapter as it is daily read; or some other good and godly prayer-booke; rather than spend their tyme in talk, and hunting after spur-money, whereon they set their whole mindes, and do often abuse dyvers if they doe not bestowe somewhat on them.' Before leaving the subject, we may add that on the belfry wall of All Saints' Church, at Hastings, are written some verses, of which the following is said to be one:

> If you ring in spur or hat,
> Sixpence you pay—be sure of that;
> And if a bell you overthrow,
> Pray pay a groat before you go.

The whip, also, although not so knightly an implement as the spur, takes part in several curious old customs. In the ancient festivals of Bacchus and Cybele, it was a distinguished performer. The game of whip-top is so ancient that it is described not only by Persius, but by Ovid and Virgil. Dryden thus picturesquely translates the famous passage in the seventh book of the *Æneid:*

> Even as young striplings whip the top for sport
> On the smooth pavement of an empty court,
> The wooden engine whirls and flies about,
> Admired with clamours of the beardless rout;
> They lash aloud; each other they provoke;
> And lend their little souls at every stroke.

The invention of town-tops is set down in *Poor Robin's Almanac* for 1677 as of an antiquity quite portentous. 'It is now eighteen hundred and four years,' he says, 'since the invention of town-tops.' A large top, it seems, was formerly provided in every village, that peasants in frosty weather, when farmers' work was slack, might be kept warm and out of mischief by playing at whip-top. The material for the whips was always dried eelskins. 'Another,' we read in the *Fifteen Comforts of Marriage*, 'tells 'em of a project he has to make town-tops spin without eelskins, as if he bore malice to the school-boys.'

Two odd customs associated with whips are mentioned by Drake and Grose. The former, in his *Eboracum*, tells us that, in York, St Luke's Day was known as Whip-dog Day, from the custom of boys going about the city whipping every dog they met with. Tradition says, that a priest celebrating mass in the cathedral on St Luke's Day, accidentally dropped the pix, which a dog snapped up and swallowed. The profanation occasioned the culprit's instant death, and originated the practice of whipping the rest of his species in the town on that anniversary for some centuries after. In Leicestershire, again, a sport called Whipping the Cock was long practised at fairs, and was seen by Grose. A cock was tied into a hat or basket, and half-a-dozen blindfolded players, armed with carters' whips, surrounded it; and having turned round three times, commenced trying to whip it. Whoever struck so as to make the cock cry out, won the game and the bird.

The whip recalls unpleasant reminiscences of the nursery and the schoolroom, of soldiers and prisoners, of fanatical flagellants and slaves. There must, however, have been something very pleasant in being whipped by proxy. Some of our early princes had a whipping-boy, to receive castigation as a substitute for the real delinquent. James IV. of Scotland had for whipping-boy no less a personage than

> Sir David Lindsay of the Mount,
> Lord Lion King at arms.

The father of a somewhat celebrated Countess of Dysart was page and whipping-boy to Charles I.

Hudibras tells us of a lady who whipped her own husband, because he had deserted the royal standard. In the good old times, women were liberally whipped, not only by their husbands, but by public functionaries. In Worcester, it would appear from the corporation record, male and female rogues were whipped at a charge of fourpence each for the whipsmen. In one entry the charge is no less than half-a-crown for whipping a woman; but this probably includes the hire of the cart which conveyed the lady to the place appointed for that ceremony. The Huntingdon records are full of similar entries. One registers the payment of eightpence 'to Thomas Hawkins for whipping two people y^{t} had the small-pox'—a singularly practical illustration of the theory of the sinfulness of being sick; another, the payment of eight-and-sixpence for apprehending a distracted woman, watching her, and whipping her the next day, with two shillings to pay a nurse; and a third, the payment of fourpence 'to a woman for whipping the said Ellen Shaw,' with an additional threepence 'for beare for her after she was whipped.' Nay, even as late as 1764, a woman was barbarously carted from Clerkenwell Bridewell to Enfield, and publicly whipped by the common hangman for cutting down wood in Enfield Chase.

Au reste, the whip is the emblem of all charioteers, coachmen, cabmen, omnibusmen, wagoners, carters, horse-drivers, donkey-drivers, and pig-drivers, that ever have been or ever will be. Every sort of material has been used in its construction. Twisted whalebone, black as well as white, and even the thick hides of the rhinoceros and hippopotamus, have had their turn. In the whip constructed of the ordinary material, much ingenuity and elegance are displayed. Each leather is made to give strength to and receive strength from the others. The whipster bends them over and under, and between and around each other with a quickness that the sharpest eyes fail to follow; and so neatly is the plaiting graduated from end to end, that we can scarcely tell where the handle ends or the lash begins.

WINTER.

WINTER! no dread of thine approach shall fill
Our hearts. Come in thy lovely robe of snow,
Jewelled with icicles. Blow, fiercely blow,
And hush the babbling of the shallow rill
With thy thick breath; wide over every hill
And echoing vale thy radiant mantle fling;
Down to thy feet in swift submission bring
The broad oak's stubborn head; and with thy shrill
Thine awful voice, the very mountains shake.
Yet shall our souls be calm. For He who hides
A golden purpose in a cloud all dark,
Thy busy hand in every motion guides,
Secures the victory to our storm-met bark,
And points to fair Spring laughing in her wake!

JOHN ELLIS.

On Saturday, the 7th of January 1860, *will be commenced in this Journal,*

A STORY, entitled

THE BATEMAN HOUSEHOLD, AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF 'STORIES AND SKETCHES,' &c. &c.

To be continued every week until completed.

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ON BOARD THE ORIENT.

Before the overland route had become the rapid and easy journey which it now is, or steam had threatened to supersede canvas in our navy and mercantile marine, the departure of a first-rate Indiaman for her destination was looked on as a more important event than it now is. *The Orient*, a fine frigate-built ship of twelve hundred tons, presented an interesting and animated scene as she lay at Spithead one bright July evening, with her fore-top-sail loose and blue-peter flying, to indicate her intention of starting for Calcutta at daybreak the following morning. The crowd of boats clustered round her was every minute increased by some fresh arrival from shore, bringing passengers with their luggage, and friends come to see the last of them; unwelcome creditors bringing bills which had been left, accidentally of course, unpaid; the captain's steward surrounded by fresh provisions of all sorts; outfitters' clerks with cases tinned over to preserve their precious contents; shipping agents and custom-house officers. Enthroned on a pile of vegetables, in a battered wherry, sat the bumboat woman, with piles of soft tack and a basket of eggs—by courtesy, styled fresh—before her; in the stern sheets, a miscellaneous collection of slop-clothing, flannel shirts, duck trousers, sou'-westers, and red night-caps. Her petticoats are of the briefest, her voice of the loudest, and her dress of the loosest description; but it is not merely with the object of allowing her redundant charms 'to sink or swell as nature pleases,' that her zone is thus ungirt; quietly ensconced beneath that ample drapery repose sundry flat jars, filled with interdicted liquors, which procure for her more custom than all the rest of her wares put together.

On board was even greater bustle; the deck was strewed with boxes and bales of uncouth cut and strange appearance, which needed not a glance at their direction to shew that they had made themselves up for a long voyage. The mates, with moist brows and disordered dresses, rushed wildly about, giving unintelligible directions. The passengers, between grief at leaving home and friends, and the confusion which reigned around them, looked and felt most thoroughly miserable; the ladies went down the ladder wrong side foremost, as if they were going down an ordinary staircase, caught their dresses on projections, and got off, some with considerable damage, some with loss of temper only. The gentlemen were perpetually entering wrong cabins by mistake, forgetting to take off their hats or stoop, and consequently bonneting themselves against the upper-deck beams, and barking their shins against boxes lying about everywhere until there was time to lower them down into the hold. This went on for some time until the evening-gun from the flag-ship boomed across the still water, announcing that it was nine o'clock, and the ship's bell rang, warning strangers that shore-boats were about to leave, and that it was time for them to do so. It was the signal for many a bitter parting, and a stream of sad faces poured down the accommodation ladder. Emotion long pent up burst forth with redoubled vehemence, and the heart which had hitherto borne itself bravely, that a sight of its grief might not increase the pang of separation, now utterly gave way when the necessity for self-control had ceased. There was little demonstration of noisy grief, and few words were spoken; but hats and handkerchiefs were waved even long after waning twilight and blinding tears had rendered invisible the spot which for the present engrossed all their thoughts.

How differently people take things in this world. Whilst the mother, whose children have just left her, sits sobbing convulsively in the darkest corner; and the young cadet, in all the desolate agony of finding himself for the first time alone amidst strangers, lies stretched on his cot, afraid to approach the light, lest his red eyes might discredit his newly assumed manliness; Mrs General Hopper sits in the stern cabin, contemplating its comfortable arrangements with serene satisfaction. For her, the voyage had no terrors, the sea no sickness; thrice had she crossed the Atlantic, the last time only a few months before, taking home Nos. 7 and 8 for their education; and now she was returning to her husband, accompanied by her two eldest daughters, whom she had fitted for the oriental market by a two years' residence at Miss Backboard's finishing academy, Polyglot Place, Bayswater. It would be unjust to say that this modern Mrs Teachem had not given them every advantage, for if they had not been taught all that was contained in her prospectus, had they not opportunities of acquiring many things not included therein? Did not Signor Fiorituri, the handsome singing-master, besides his own legitimate line of instruction, give lessons in the art of flirtation, with practical illustrations? Did they not learn from Mademoiselle d'Equivoque, the French governess, the art of telling a fib with becoming self-possession? Could economy be better taught than by keeping back their pocket-money for fines, or patience and self-denial more forcibly inculcated than by that want of punctuality which kept them waiting for everything, meals included?

It is to be regretted that Miss Emily Hopper did not avail herself of these advantages as she might have done; that she even went the length of telling Signor Fioritori there was no use for saying 'carissima mia' so often: and that she could never reject a stupid partner by the pardonable fiction of a pre-engagement, without betraying herself by a tell-tale blush. Her elder sister, Julia, however, dutifully wishing to reap the full advantage of those opportunities for which her anxious parents paid so dear, applied her undivided attention to learning these and many similar accomplishments, and profited by them to an extent equally creditable to herself and her instructors. She was a sparkling brunette, with marked features and large flashing eyes, which she knew when to use, and when to conceal beneath their long dark lashes. But well as her eyes were managed, she could not restrain a look which seemed to claim as a right that admiration which men are always ready to bestow on any pretty girl who understands the art of captivating them. A small slight figure and profusion of chestnut hair, curling naturally, gave her younger sister so childish an appearance, that you could hardly believe she had passed seventeen, whilst her naturally retiring disposition, together with the kind of languor which is often found in persons who have spent the first years of their life in a tropical country, made casual acquaintances think her either stupid or reserved, neither of which, to do her justice, Miss Emily was.

Mrs Hopper was 'fat and forty,' not fair—on the contrary, dark enough to justify the suspicion that there must have been a dash of the tar-brush in her composition; though the lady herself attributed her dusky complexion to an inordinate affection for coffee—a fact which, unless communicated by a person of her unimpeachable veracity, could never be suspected by her friends, as she, with praiseworthy self-denial, consumed but a small quantity of that beverage in proportion to her daily quota of more invigorating fluids. From living altogether among officers, she had adopted a style of phraseology generally confined exclusively to the other sex; spoke of gentlemen by their surnames only, and coupled those of ladies with their husbands' regiments or situation—as Mrs Black of the 20th, Mrs White of the artillery, and Mrs Brown of the civil service. She had all subjects connected with general orders, pay-regulations, articles of war, and military topics in general, at her finger-ends, and from hearing her husband questions out of Sinnott's Catechism, had acquired a very fair knowledge of drill and field tactics.

When, at eighteen, she married Captain Hopper, she was a little taller, and a great deal younger than that dapper little officer; but now that years and Allsopp had expanded her maturer charms, she was as big as the general and his aid-de-camp put together, the latter being no other than their eldest son. Like ninety-nine married ladies out of every hundred, she wore—metaphorically, I mean, of course—certain unmentionable articles of apparel, which, as being a man's birthright, are often used as symbols of his authority; but whereas most women have tact enough to conceal from the eyes of the world the fact of their possessing the aforesaid garments, Mrs Hopper did not, but asserted her authority in an open manner on all occasions. The consequence was, gossips used to say she commanded the division, that the aid-de-camp was second in command, and the old general came next. She was now returning to her husband, after a brief absence, and except for the five youngsters left behind at school, she had not a care in the world. She had two of the best cabins in the best ship of the season, which would probably arrive at Calcutta at the pleasantest time of year; and the adjoining cabin was occupied by Mr Potter, a civilian of high standing in the service, and a most eligible party for either of the girls. To be sure, he was more than double their age, and looked even older, and had a dictatorial manner, and not very amiable temper; but he would soon be a judge on five thousand a year, and his wife the 'burra beebee,' or great lady, of the station. Even if this failed, there could be little doubt that girls of their appearance and accomplishments would, under proper management, make a brilliant match, particularly as a confidential friend had given her the latest quotations in the Indian matrimonial market—'spinsters scarce, and in great demand; holders firm in consequence; a few inferior lots recently changed names at a high figure.'

The sun rose brightly next morning, and soon afterwards the slumbers of those passengers who had been lucky enough to get any, were rudely broken by the band of *The Orient*—namely, two fiddles and a fife—striking up *The Girl I left behind me*, and the men stamping round the capstan in time to the melody, whilst weighing anchor. Such as were rash enough to venture on deck found themselves in everybody's way and their own. Now a rope's end came tumbling down from the tops, with what sailors call 'Scarborough warning,' that is, let go first, and with a cry of 'Stand from under' afterwards; then a string of sailors running aft, nearly upset them; or the bight of a quiet-looking rope started up into sudden activity, apparently only for the purpose of barking people's shins, or tripping them up altogether. They got hustled and jostled on all sides, and were heartily glad when all sails being set to a nicety, the watch was called, and the rest dived below.

Ropes being coiled down, decks swept, and everything reduced to order, we have time to look about us at the ship and her contents. *The Orient* is slipping down Channel with a northerly wind and smooth water. The breeze is light, and the motion so easy that, but for the receding outline of the Isle of Wight, it would be difficult to believe she was making any progress. Her commander, Captain Hawes, was a thorough sailor and cheerful companion: his choleric temper, if easily aroused, was easily appeased, and a bright smile disclosing a good set of teeth and merry eye, made you forget the ugliness of his other features. Incipient baldness made his forehead, which was broad and white, look higher than nature intended; but with this exception, all the visible portion of his skin was dyed a reddish brown from constant exposure. His usual costume was a kind of uniform; blue cloth, with anchor buttons, surmounted by a cap with gold-lace band; but when bad weather was expected, he used to ship in lieu thereof an old white hat, very bad in the brim, and shiny at the edges, which went by the name of *The Orient* barometer. It was often the passengers' first intimation of an impending gale, and seldom did its predictions fail to be verified. Duty being over for the present, he is bestowing all his attention on his passengers, particularly the ladies, who, as the breakfast-hour approaches, begin to congregate on the poop. He hears the same remarks, listens to the same complaints, and replies to the same queries, which have been addressed to him during every voyage for the last twenty years, with as much apparent interest as if they were quite new. He does not introduce them to each other, because he knows that the enforced proximity of life at sea will soon develop all that is congenial and antagonistic in their natures, and every one will then be best able to select his own acquaintances.

Mrs Hopper was in great feather, nothing daunted by finding that Mr Potter looked older and more unpromising than she had expected by daylight;

having, as a set off, discovered that there was a second unmarried civilian on board, a Mr Holford, considerably the other's junior, whom she might play off against him; and if the senior's heart proved impregnable, the feigned attack might easily and profitably be converted into a real one. Charles Holford, late assistant-magistrate of Dalpooree, was a tall, slight, quietly dressed man, considerably on the wrong side of thirty, with that look of delicacy, more apparent than real, which is often seen in persons who have lived any time in a hot climate. Unassuming and agreeable, he was generally well received in society; and having a cheerful temperament, and the art of adapting himself to whatever position he was placed in, he would have been as happy as falls to the lot of most men, but that he was cursed with an indecision of character which kept him in a perpetual worry.

The rest of the passengers consisted of officers returning from furlough, most of them exhibiting the conscious awkward manner and sedulous attention to their wives which marks the newly married man. An experienced eye can detect them at once in the same way it would scrutinise a gang working in chains on the roads, by the uneasiness with which the new-comers wear their fetters. There were also a missionary and his wife, two indigo-planters, half-a-dozen cadets—raw noisy lads fresh from school, with smooth faces and rough manners—and several young ladies, who would have been horrified at any one taking them for 'speculation misses,' and who were all going to the East, for most excellent reasons, quite unconnected with matrimonial views. One had been seized with a sudden access of sisterly affection, which drew her irresistibly to join her brother; another was about to pay her uncle a visit, and return in a year; whilst a third had been recommended to try a warm climate for the cure of some mysterious malady, the seeds of which lay so deep in her constitution that no one could ever discover them. Nevertheless, had a clairvoyant medium been required to detail the contents of their tin-lined cases, or, Belzoni-like, been enabled to dive into the pyramids of finery which each was carrying out, he would there have discovered certain long veils, orange wreaths, and rich snowy dresses, which, though they might have been worn in a ball-room, were better suited for a bride; and shewed that, though the fair owners did not contemplate matrimony, they were prepared for every contingency, in case they were driven to it against their will. Over these the captain exercised unceasing vigilance, and seemed to consider them, like the chronometers, under his especial superintendence. He kept them near him at dinner, did not allow them on deck after a certain hour, and was always ready to interpose his arm and the offer of a turn on the poop whenever he saw a cadet or other ineligible person making himself too agreeable.

After a few days, things subsided into the usual routine of life at sea. The passengers became accustomed to the motion of the ship and each other, and as the weather continued fine, by the time they got into blue water, both home-sickness and sea-sickness were, in most instances, among things of the past. The ladies began to shew on the poop, and books, chess, and backgammon filled up the intervals between eating and talking. On fine evenings, a dance was got up to the music of the afore-mentioned fiddles and fife; the sailors began to rehearse a play, and prepare scenery and dresses from the scanty materials at their disposal; and a newspaper, *The Orient Sun*, was started, with the doctor as editor, two manuscript copies of which appeared every Saturday. A lath, taken out of the venetians of the editor's cabin, served as a letter-box, into which contributors were invited to slip their communications. It got on very well at first, and afforded much amusement as long as its contents were confined to imaginary events in 'Steerage Street,' and fictitious advertisements from 'Capstan Square;' but after some time, the column devoted to 'Current Events and Floating Rumours' became so extremely personal, that the captain was obliged to undertake the censorship of the press, and suppress it altogether. The doctor professed himself much grieved at the untimely end of his bantling, but in the secrets of his heart was really delighted to have a decent excuse for abandoning his invidious post. He had been kept in perpetual hot water during his brief editorial career, and had not only been put into Coventry by half the passengers, but was more than once threatened with personal violence by individuals who were, or fancied themselves to be, lampooned in the columns of *The Orient Sun*.

With consummate skill did that veteran campaigner, Mrs Hopper, make her approaches to storm Mr Holford's heart. A few days' observation had disclosed to her experienced eye that Mr Potter was too strongly intrenched behind old-bachelor habits and selfishness to be induced to surrender his liberty to the fairest enslaver that ever donned a petticoat; and accordingly, she brought all her forces to bear upon the other, planning with a skill worthy of a general's wife, and executing with boldness worthy of the general himself. More industrious than the little busy bee, who can only avail himself of every shining hour, she could turn a stormy one to advantage, by finding it impossible to prevent their chairs from slipping, unless Mr Holford's was placed in their immediate vicinity. On such occasions, the motion of the ship rendered the support of his arm indispensable for a walk on the poop; and after a few turns, she contrived to feel tired, and resigned his arm in favour of one of the young ladies. If a shoal of porpoises was visible forward, or any other of those objects which relieve the tedium of life on the ocean-wave, she could not think of allowing them to go and inspect it, unless Mr Holford took charge of them; or if it happened that they ventured without him, she took the earliest opportunity of despatching him in the same direction, with a message to Emily to keep out of the sun, or for Julia to put on her shawl. She did not scare him by making any direct attack on him, by either expatiating on their many virtues, or setting forth the relative advantages of matrimony, but was content to let time and propinquity do their silent work. Indeed, she felt so sure of success, that she already regarded him with the eye of a mother-in-law, and was only doubtful on one point—whether to regard him as the future husband of dear Julia or Emily. After much patient consideration, she decided on the latter, as he shewed himself strangely insensible to some advances made by her elder sister, who thereupon settled the matter by commencing a violent flirtation with Captain Shycock, another of the passengers. He was an officer of the now execrated, but then admired, Bengal native infantry, and would have been strikingly handsome, but that meat-tiffins and want of exercise had spoiled his figure, whilst his face bore unmistakable tokens of late hours, pegs, and *vingt-un*, all unlimited. The reader is requested to understand that 'peg' is a kind of beverage much in favour with eastern Indians. The compound, like the name, is simple in its elegance, consisting merely of pouring a bottle of iced soda-water into a tumbler prepared for its admission by the previous introduction of a modicum of brandy, varying according to taste. It possesses indescribable charms for most sojourners in that thirsty land, as it cools whilst it exhilarates, and never gives a headache in the morning. But these charms which render it irresistible, make it all the more dangerous, whence it derives its name, as each draught is said to be a 'peg' in the imbiber's coffin.

Captain Shycock had gone out to India with a good constitution, an excellent education, and nothing in his pocket but his cadet's commission, with which he might have got on very well, but for the misfortune of being posted to a 'fast' regiment. Immediately on joining, he fell among thieves, who soon taught one of his facile disposition to imitate their vices, and encumbered him with a load of debt, which rendered him reckless and improvident during his future career, from the feeling that it was hopeless to try and extricate himself from his difficulties. His ready wit and pleasing manners made him a welcome guest in every house; yet he was the last man whom a bank-director would accept as a security, or a prudent woman as her son-in-law. Mrs Hopper, whom cantonment gossip had made familiar with his financial position, looked on him with no favourable eye; but her maternal anxiety was allayed when she found her admonitions taken in good part by the young lady, who assured her she looked much higher than an infantry captain, and was only trying to get her hand in, by reducing theory to practice, without any ulterior views. As Mrs Hopper was rather anxious that her daughter should be in tip-top flirting condition before bringing her out on the Calcutta course, she had no objection to her going into training beforehand; besides which, Captain Shycock made himself so extremely useful by rendering her various attentions, helping her to the best things at dinner, and mixing her grog to a nicety, that, though she did not in any way encourage the intimacy, she did not forbid it.

Thus the time wore on. The line was passed without much delay from calms or baffling winds; and meeting the south-east trade-wind unusually high up, *The Orient* progressed rapidly, and had got to the southward of the Cape before the appearance of the skipper's white hat heralded a succession of heavy gales, alternating with flat calms. The latter is generally the worse of the two, as when a gale subsides rapidly, and is succeeded by a 'Soger's hurricane' or flat calm, it leaves the ship an unmanageable mass, rolling helplessly in the trough of the sea, without motion enough to give her steerage-way, or the action of her canvas to steady her. The elements seemed to take a malicious pleasure in marring the enjoyment of that important period of life afloat, the hour which succeeds the sounding of 'that tocsin of the soul, the dinner-bell.' The ship, too, assisted them by making a point of giving a few vicious weather-rolls in the middle of it, causing the dinner-things to indulge in various eccentric and unseemly gambols, and restoring powers of locomotion to defunct bodies. 'Slips between the cup and the lip' were more numerous than the framer of the proverb contemplated; good liquor, as if intended for external application only, was dashed into the face, or bedewed the shirt-collar; the hand on its road to the mouth changed its direction to grasp the nearest stanchion; whilst the contents of plates were transferred to the outside of the place destined for their reception, by a summary process, equally unwelcome and unexpected.

Despite of delays and discomforts, the good ship progressed steadily towards her destination; the captain's head-gear rose with the barometer from the 'stormy' white hat to the 'set fair' cap with gold band, and *The Orient* was once more in smooth water. Nevertheless, Mrs Hopper's satisfaction did not increase, inasmuch as the progress of her daughter Emily's affair did not keep pace with that of the ship, or her own wishes. Had she continued to trust to time it would probably have advanced much more rapidly; but now she was always flattering and manœuvring, and setting the trap in so transparent a manner, that the bird was often scared away. Of course, Holford could not be ignorant of the tendency of those attentions; but they flattered his vanity, and made the time pass pleasantly; besides, he was one of those persons with whom the nearest influence is always the strongest, and who, incapable of forming any definite plans of their own, either act from the impulse of the moment or adapt their conduct to external circumstances. He began to like Emily more than he cared to admit to himself; he felt sure she was amiable and well disposed; and he knew that man was not born to live alone and lead the hermit's life he had endured at an out-station. Nevertheless, had she possessed as many virtues as Cœlebs found in Lucilla, he could not have made up his mind as to whether matrimony would advance his happiness; whether she really liked him, or was only a passive instrument in her mother's hands; or what reception his family, with their aristocratic prejudices, might give a person, however excellent, whose antecedents, to speak charitably, were involved in considerable obscurity.

Twenty times a day he asked himself these questions, and often thought he had come to a final decision on the subject, when some casual observation, or accidental circumstance, made a total revolution in his sentiments. One hour he would take a cheroot into the hammock nettings in order to avoid the fascination of her presence; the next, he would be bending over her chair, or offering his arm for a turn on the poop. Thus he might have gone on wavering and undecided until their arrival in port had scattered them to their different destinations—when, after it was too late to recall the past, he would have wished he had acted differently, and regretted all his life that he had failed to secure the prize that was within his grasp—had not chance made for him that decision which he was unable to make for himself.

The voyage was drawing towards a close; people had read each other's books and heard each other's stories too often to endure further repetition. Gentlemen were pertinacious in inquiring the distance run and the interval which still remained; and the ladies, who had lately occupied any time which hung heavy upon their hands by sparring with each other, began to hoist signals of friendship, and think that as the time remaining was now so brief, they might as well be reconciled again. *The Orient* had passed the line for the second time, and was nearly in the latitude of Ceylon, when, on coming up from dinner one day, the passengers found Captain Hawes in his old white hat busily engaged in getting down royal and top-gallant yards, and making everything snug for bad weather. The barometer gave little indication of a coming change, but the experienced eye of an old sailor detected what was invisible to a landsman; and as gales and typhoons often occur at the breaking up of the monsoon, the skipper resolved not to be caught unprepared. At sunset, the wind increased, the glass fell considerably, and sail was reduced to single-reefed topsails over courses. As the wind was fair and plenty of it, even under this short canvas, the ship made rapid progress; and the captain, anxious to gain a character for his ship by a quick passage, carried on as long as he could with prudence. The sea and sky were of a uniform leaden hue, and there was an oppressive feel and damp heat in the atmosphere, often met with in the Red Sea, and which makes the air feel sultry far beyond what the indication of the thermometer would seem to warrant.

The passengers had met as usual in the cuddy, to partake of those creature comforts which, whatever be their nature, are termed 'grog' on board ship, and served up at nine every evening. At one end of the long table, a whist-party sat immersed in their rubber. Near them sat Mrs Hopper and her youngest daughter, busily plying their needles on some of those flimsy inutilities which give ladies an appearance of industry and an excuse for talking. At the other end, Captain Shycock and Miss Hopper were playing backgammon—a game which, whatever objections may be urged against it, is an excellent one for flirtation. When anything particular is to be said, it is only necessary to give the box an extra rattle, then, in the most natural manner stooping your head to look at the dice, you catch the faintly murmured reply, the music of which your neighbour's unhallowed ear cannot overhear. The present game seemed to be an unusually interesting one, as it appeared to have absorbed the players' entire attention to the exclusion of everything around them, obliging them to speak in whispers and keep their heads very close together. Nevertheless, a critical looker on might have perceived that the rules of the game were not always strictly attended to; and the moves made by the men seldom accorded with the throws of the dice. Mrs Hopper regarded them with no benignant eye. She used to boast—probably with truth—that she could see as far through a millstone as any one. Had her vision just then been keen enough to penetrate the inch of solid mahogany which composed the table, she would have seen beneath it her daughter's hand calmly reposing in that of Captain Shycock. But though her sight did not enable her to do this, it told a shrewd observer like her that when people only use one hand for the complicated movement of backgammon, it is more than probable that the other is otherwise engaged. Accordingly, she seized the opportunity which was just then afforded her of interrupting their game, by asking Captain Shycock to be kind enough to step on deck and see what was the matter, as the boatswain was heard piping 'All hands shorten sail,' followed by the rush of feet up the ladders. Intimating his regret at the unwelcome interruption by a gentle pressure of the hand, and an unmeaning grin which he mistook for a killing glance, but merely saying: 'I will be down again immediately,' the gallant captain rose unwillingly to fulfil the lady's behest.

He was down sooner than he expected, for at that moment the long threatened gale burst upon the ship. After a momentary lull, the wind suddenly shifted right round, and came down on her with terrific violence from almost exactly the opposite quarter, taking *The Orient* aback, and nearly laying her on her beam-ends. There was no time to clue up or furl, so everything was let go by the run. The general confusion which ensued, the roar of wind through the rigging, the hoarse commands of officers, the rattling of the chain-halliards, and the sudden heeling over of the ship, were enough to terrify stouter hearts than those which were now sprawling about the cuddy in all directions. She lay over so much, that everything not securely lashed or cleeted down, went bodily to leeward. Captain Shycock feeling himself going, grasped one of the table-stanchions, to stay his downward course; but the prop was slight, and he was not. The faithless timber broke into splinters, one of which coming in contact with the only surviving lamp, added darkness and boiling oil to the previous confusion. Down plumped the gallant captain into the midst of broken tumblers, smashed crockery, capsized work-boxes, overturned chairs, cards, books, chess-men, struggling men, and screaming women. He endeavoured to rescue himself from this ignominious position by crawling to the weather-side on his hands and knees; but had not gone far, when, slipping in the hot oil which still streamed upon the deck, he fetched sternway, and glided back to his original position, the most prominent part of his retreating person coming in contact with the needle which Mrs Hopper still held in her hand. Bounding aside with a sharp exclamation of pain, and feeling some lady close to him, who, from her dress, he conjectured to be his charmer Julia, he gently encircled her waist with his arm, but finding, from the startled exclamation which followed, that it was the missionary's demure helpmate, he incautiously blundered out: 'Beg pardon; I really thought it was Miss Hopper;' which imprudent avowal gave ample food for subsequent gossip amongst the select coteries of Calcutta, where it circulated extensively after *The Orient's* arrival.

When the squall began, Holford was in the act of handing some wine and water to Emily Hopper. Abandoning the glass to its fate, he supported her with one arm, whilst with the other he grasped the railing at the head of the stairs leading to the lower deck, and thus drew them both into the recess between the railing and the poop awning cabin. Here they remained snugly ensconced; and as 'the mingled sounds came softened from below,' felt they had every reason for congratulating themselves on being so much better off than their neighbours. Perhaps Holford gave her rather more support, and held her a little closer than the exigencies of the case required; nevertheless, she bore it with praiseworthy equanimity, either from being too much alarmed to mind it, or, more probably, thinking it by no means disagreeable. At length she said: 'Oh, Mr Holford, will the ship never come right again? This is very dreadful!'

'Very delightful, rather,' said he; 'I don't care how long it remains so. I should wish always to have you near me. Should you dislike it very much?'

There was no attempt to withdraw the hand he held; nor was it until he felt how much it trembled, that he bethought himself how much more than he intended his words might convey. A moment's reflection shewed him that he had passed the turning-point, and there was nothing left now but to go straight ahead. Accordingly, acting on the spur of the moment, he whispered a few words, which ten minutes before he did not believe he could have made up his mind to speak; and ten minutes after, he could not recall exactly. To his own ear, even then, they sounded strange and incoherent; nevertheless, they were sufficient to render Emily as careless as himself of the storm which raged around, and convey to her that the man she loved with all the affectionate tenderness of her nature had asked her to become his wife.

The response, if any was given, was not very distinct, but it is surprising how few words people make serve sometimes on occasions of the kind. The steward, who happened to be close to them as he groped his way up the cabin stairs, avers he did not catch a syllable, but heard some sounds which induced him to suppose that the soda-water bottles were partakers of the universal excitement, and bursting their corks at a rate which promised soon to exhaust the supply. By this time, the squall had settled down into a gale, which lasted a couple of days. The ship was made snug under close-reefed top-sails, lights were brought, the cuddy put to rights, and the ladies rescued from their uneasy position.

Ten days after this, *The Orient* dropped her anchor in the Hoogly, off Garden Reach, and her cabins were soon deserted, their late occupants scattered in all directions, in many instances, never to meet again. We may reasonably conclude, however, that at least two of them were afterwards united, as soon after, among the list of steamer-passengers up the Ganges, we find the names of 'General, Mrs, and Miss Hopper, and Mr and Mrs Holford, civil service.' We miss the name of Captain Shycock, but his destination had been settled a couple of days after their arrival, by one of those curt paragraphs in general orders which say so little and mean so much. Any person reading that 'Captain Shycock was directed to assume command of a detachment of recruits, and proceed at once by land to the north-western provinces,' would suppose it was the most natural thing in the world that young soldiers should require an officer to control them, and that the officer selected was eminently qualified for the duty. Those, however, who knew more about the matter, were aware that there was some other reason for the order quite unconnected with the exigencies of the service.

General Hopper, who was in Calcutta waiting the arrival of his family, found that the affair between his eldest daughter and the gallant captain had gone much further than prudence warranted. It had begun in idleness, the parent of so many evils, and ended by their being very desperate about each other, vowing constancy, and so forth. The general was immensely indignant at the idea of having spent such a sum on his daughter's education, and brought her out fifteen thousand miles, only to marry her to an infantry captain, without connections in the country, or standing in the service, and whose name stood high only on the wrong side of the bank-books. Like a sensible man, however, he neither stormed nor swore, nor threatened to shave her head, or lock her up, but got quietly into his buggy, and drove over to the adjutant-general, who was an old chum of his. They both retired into an inner sanctum, and remained closeted together some time, during which the orderly in waiting told all inquirers at the office that they were engaged in discussing business of importance, by which he meant cheroots and brandy pawnee. The following morning, the paragraph above quoted appeared in orders, whereby the obnoxious suitor was banished to a distance sufficient to remove all anxiety on his account. They did not meet again until years afterwards. When Colonel Shycock returned home again on furlough, to repair the ravages which hard service at the mess-table had made in his constitution, he recognised in the interesting widow he met in the *Suez* steamer his former flame in *The Orient.* Time had thinned his flowing hair, and materially increased the diameter of his waist, still he was a personable man to look at, and there is always a soft spot in every one's heart for an old love; besides which, he could claim the advantage of having been constant, and understood the importance of 'taking her with the tear in her eye;' all of which combined, rendered him irresistible, and enabled him to claim the gratitude of all subscribers to the Military Fund —it being a rule with that institution, that a widow loses her pension on her marrying again—by taking a widow off its lists.

THE MISLETOE.

CERTAINLY, if we wished to initiate a neophyte into the pleasures of early rising, we should not begin by dragging him to Covent Garden at four o'clock on a December morning; it would be like welcoming a new-comer to Malvern with the douche; nevertheless, it is well worth staying up, if not getting up, to see the arrival of carts and wagons with their towering loads of 'Christmas,' and to hear the stormy discussions betwixt buyers and sellers, the yells of the urchins perched atop of the wavering masses of green, the wranglings of the porters, and all the 'confusion confounded' of a market held before the dawn of day. Phew! how bleakly the wind rushes past Inigo Jones's magnificent barn, to give rough greeting to his country friends, and bury himself in their prickly arms! Never mind the cold, man! Look at those huge piles of holly glistening in the gas-light, and warm thyself with thinking of the precious family-gatherings, the pleasant parties, the fun, enjoyment, and happiness, at which that prince of evergreens will assist. Look at the heaps of misletoe lying around, kisses going at a shilling a bunch, a cheap investment for gentlemen who do not begrudge fifty shillings and costs for saluting a reluctant beauty. Talk of summer roses! A fig for them! Give us the misletoe, whose magical presence creates brighter roses than ever Philomel wooed, and makes thousands of happy English homesteads ring with girlish laughter, when

> Many a maiden's cheek is red,
> By lips and laughter thither led;
> And fluttering bosoms come and go
> Under the Druid misletoe.

Ah! many a stout heart has been lured to fatal 'coral reefs' by that prim-looking plant, whose gaunt appearance is little in keeping with its osculatory associations. But if the misletoe cannot compete with its compeers in the Christmas garland for beauty, it is of far greater interest in the eyes, not only of young ladies, but of botanists, naturalists, and antiquaries, to whom it has long been a puzzle and a mystery.

The means by which this strange plant, the only true parasite indigenous to this country, is propagated is still a moot-point. Old Gerarde says: 'This excrescence hath not any root, nor doth increase himself of his seed as some have supposed, but it rather cometh of a certain moisture and substance gathered together upon the boughs and joints of the trees, through the barke whereof this vaporous moisture proceeding, bringeth forth the misletoe.' But it seems now agreed that the fieldfare, black-bird, and missel-thrush, are the principal agents concerned; but whether by merely rubbing the superfluous seeds adhering to their beaks on the bark of trees, or by passing them through their bodies, remains, and is likely to remain, matter for doubt and discussion. Germination having taken place, the misletoe maintains its singularity. While the young root of almost every other plant descends, that of the misletoe at first rises upwards, and then bends over until it reaches the body of the substance to which the seed is attached. The extremity of the radicle having fixed itself to the bark, if more than one has sprung from a single seed, the embryos separate from it, and become distinct plants. When the misletoe germinates on the upper side of a branch, the shoots bend upwards; if on the under side, they descend; and when on the side of a perpendicular trunk, spread horizontally. The roots penetrate through the bark, between the inner bark and the soft wood, where the sap is most abundant, and as the tree advances in age, become embedded in the solid wood, absorbing the ascending and returning sap, and preventing its circulation, and there the parasite flourishes until the tree itself decays.

The misletoe is plentiful in the colder parts of Asia and throughout Europe, but is not a native either of Scotland or Ireland. It has been found upon the ash, elm, hazel, acacia, horse-chestnut, laburnum, pear, sallow, larch, spruce, service, quicken, purging-thorn, lime, crab, maple, willow, sycamore, locust, olive, vine, plum, laurel, medlar, and walnut trees, but in England is most common on the white-thorn, poplar, and apple. On the oak, it is very rarely found; so rarely, that there is a tree still standing in Derbyshire, which, two hundred years ago, bore the name of 'the misletoe oak,' being reputed to be the only misletoe-bearing oak in the country. It has long since ceased, however, to have any claim to its old title.

The reputation of the misletoe has been a sanctified one for ages. The Greeks venerated it for its supposed medicinal properties; Ovid and Virgil had faith in its magic powers; Lelius enumerates it among the necessaries of a magician; the magi of Persia gathered it with religious solemnities, and the Scandinavians dedicated it to their Venus, in remembrance of an important crisis in the history of their favourite hero Balder, related in the following legend: Balder, the son of Friga (the northern goddess of love), dreamed a dream presaging danger to his life. The frightened goddess, to make sure of fate, exacted an oath from Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, and all things springing from them, that they would do no harm to her son. This done, the Scandinavian gods met in their hall, and placing Balder in their midst, amused themselves by casting stones, darts, lances, and swords at him as he stood. True to their oaths, they fell from him, leaving him unscathed. Loke, the spirit of evil, filled with envy and wonder at the sight, resolved to learn the secret of Balder's invulnerability. Transforming himself into an old woman, he waited upon Friga; told her how her son bore unhurt the assault of all the deities, and soon wiled himself into her confidence, and won the secret of Balder's strength. To his inquiry if all things had made the promise, the goddess disclosed to him that all had taken the oath save the misletoe, which was too feeble to do hurt, if it would. Loke bade adieu to the deceived Friga, resumed his own shape, and plucking up the misletoe by its roots, fashioned it into an arrow as he went. On rejoining the assembly, he found the gods still at their sport, but looking around, spied blind Hoder (the god of fate) standing silently apart from an amusement he could not share. Loke entreated him to join in doing honour to Friga's offspring, placed the arrow in his hand, and guided his arm. It flew with fatal accuracy, piercing the unhappy Balder through and through, and stretching him dead before the startled gods. All nature mourned so bitterly the death of the sun-god, that Hela agreed to restore him if it was shewn that everything lamented. Then every creature wept, the trees even drooped their branches in token of their grief. Loke alone stood tearless. In a holy rage, the assembled gods rushed on the cause of the world's sorrow, bore him to the bottomless pit, and chained him fast. At this unexpected result of his evil work, Loke shed tears copiously, and Hela's condition being thus fulfilled, Balder returned to life. His enemy still remains in durance vile. When men hear of earthquakes, they may know it is the wicked Loke who is straining to set himself free.

But it was among the Druids that the misletoe was especially venerated. Having a peculiar reverence for the number three, the fact of its berries and leaves growing in triads, was sufficient to proclaim it a holy plant, by which their god Tutanes set his seal upon the oak. The commencement of a new year was a period of great Druidical solemnities, among which the ceremony of cutting the misletoe ranked pre-eminent. Five days after the new moon, the Druids went in stately procession into the forest, and raised an altar of grass beneath the finest misletoe-bearing oak they could find. Binding two milk-white unyoked bulls to the tree, the arch-Druid, arrayed in white vestments, ascended the oak, and, with a golden knife or axe, removed the sacred parasite. The inferior priests stood beneath with a white cloth, into which the plant was carefully dropped; for if a portion of it but touched the ground, it was an omen of misfortune to the land. The bulls having been sacrificed, the misletoe was dipped in cold water, and distributed among the people, who cherished it as an antidote against poison, a protection against witchcraft, and a remedy for sterility. Some of its supernatural attributes yet linger about it. It is known among the Holstein peasants as 'the spectre's branch,' which not only renders spirits visible to human sight, but will compel them to speak at command; it is also reckoned a sure talisman of success in the chase, and an infallible specific for green wounds. In the middle ages, it bore a great reputation as a remedy for epilepsy, and its efficacy was believed in to a much later period. Boyle records some remarkable cures effected by it, and subsequent medical writers attest its value in convulsive diseases; but it has since fallen into such disrepute, that its name has been expunged from the materia medica.

According to Stukeley, it was once the custom at York to carry misletoe on Christmas-eve to the high-altar of the cathedral, 'and proclaim a public and universal liberty, pardon and freedom to all sorts of inferior and even wicked people, at the gate of the city towards the four quarters of heaven.' Gay writes in his *Trivia*—

> When rosemary and bays, the poet's crown,
> Are bawled in frequent cries through all the town,
> Then judge the festival of Christmas near,
> Christmas, the joyous period of the year;
> Now with bright holly all the temple strew
> With laurel green and sacred misletoe.

This testimony to the introduction of the misletoe among the decorations of the church is noticed by Brande; but that stony-hearted Dryasdust is so much scandalised to note the fact, that he attempts to throw doubts upon the veracity of the poet, and unctuously relates how the curate of Teddington refused it admittance; but it is very certain that among other pleasant but unedifying practices which in the earlier ages crept into the service, kissing was one, until it became so popular that kissing and its provocative misletoe were banished from the sacred precincts altogether. The origin of the time-honoured custom of kissing under the misletoe is wrapt in obscurity; but it is a very old as well as a very good fashion, and maidens, rather than be defrauded of their due, would hang up evergreens decked with ribbons and oranges, and make a 'kissing bunch' a substitute for the sacred plant.

Shakspeare has but one solitary allusion to the misletoe, an uncomplimentary one too—he calls it 'the baleful misletoe;' in revenge for this hard epithet, the slandered plant has fastened on the limes of Datchet Mead, that may have seen Sir John display his alacrity in sinking, till they are fast decaying, and realise the poet's description of

> Trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,
> O'ercome with moss and baleful misletoe.

Indeed, the crowning glory of Christmas has met but scant justice at the hands of our poets; even the minor minstrels scarcely deign to waste a rhyme upon it; though one of them will supply us with a pleasant concluding stanza—

> Under the misletoe, pearly and green,
> Meet the kind lips of the young and the old;
> Under the misletoe, hearts may be seen
> Glowing as though they had never been cold;
> Under the misletoe, peace and good-will,
> Mingle the spirits that long have been twain;
> Leaves of the olive branch twined with it still,
> While breathings of Hope fill the loud carol strain.

Yet why should this holy and festival mirth
In the reign of old Christmas tide only be found?
Hang up Love's misletoe over the earth,
And let us kiss under it all the year round!

SOLAR PHENOMENA.

It has been said that the world rarely acknowledges its greatest benefactors, and usually behaves with indifference to those to whom it is the most indebted. There is certainly no object from which we derive so many comforts, and even necessaries, as from the glorious sun, and yet with what neglect he is usually treated. Seldom do we find any remarks made about him in which some complaint is not mixed up. 'The sun is awfully hot,' is a most common observation; and rarely, indeed, do we hear any thanks given for the heat and light with which he favours us. 'To make hay while the sun shines' has become a homely proverb; but it is one which appears to insinuate that we ought to take all the advantage that we can of his light whilst he yields it, instead of intimating that we are under great obligations to our central orb for that which he does give.

Nevertheless, those idolaters who worshipped the sun had much reason for their idolatry; for we may fairly conclude that were it not for sun-light and sun-heat, we should soon be destitute of our daily bread, and all that now flourishes on earth would cease to be. Considering, therefore, how essential to the existence of all earthly things is this sun that we so neglect, let us inquire into the size, appearance, character, and habits of that primary orb, around which our earth revolves but as a little satellite.

The sun is situated at about ninety-five millions of miles from the earth, a distance which it is difficult to realise, unless we compare it with terrestrial objects. If a man were to travel 3800 times round our globe—a distance equal to 7600 voyages to Australia—he would pass over a distance equal to that of the earth from the sun: or if we could perform a journey by express train to the sun, we should, if we travelled at the rate of 60 miles per hour, occupy upwards of 180 years upon the journey. Thus, to make a voyage round the sun, and to keep at a mean distance of ninety-five millions of miles, obliges the earth to pass over 565,488,000 miles every year.

When we reflect upon the vastness of this machinery, and upon the astounding facts which these movements reveal, we can readily conceive how repulsive were the announcements of the earth's movements to those heathen and bigoted minds who had taught that this tiny world was the grandest and most important object in the universe; for to displace it from the centre of the universe, was to remove it from the position of honour, and make it but a secondary planet in the system.

Having found the sun's distance from the earth, the astronomer can then find his size, which is upon an equally tremendous scale. While our earth is about eight thousand miles in diameter, or, more correctly speaking, 7926 in the broadest part, the sun is rather more than one hundred times that magnitude, his correct diameter being 882,000 miles. His circumference, therefore, instead of being about twenty-five thousand miles, like our little earth, is 2,764,000 miles; and in bulk the sun is about a million and a quarter times the greater. The difference between the sun and our earth is, in short, not less than that between the *Great Eastern* and a boy's toy sailing-boat.

Here, then, we have the distance and the size of the orb to which we owe all our heat and light, our ripened crops and fruit, and much more, probably, than we yet are aware of. If an observer examine the sun by the aid of a common telescope, taking the precaution to use a dark-coloured glass, he will note upon the surface of the sun some small black spots; these will first appear upon the eastern limb of the sun, and will then pass near the centre, and will disappear upon the opposite side. Continued observation will shew that some of these spots will, after a certain period, return into view, will pass across as before, and so on. This fact is sufficient to prove that the sun, like the planets which he lights up, rotates upon his axis, and that the period of his rotation is about 25⅓ of our days. The apparent interval between the departure and return of a particular spot is rather more than 27 days, because the motion of the earth in its orbit causes a difference in the apparent return of the same spot.

We are thus enabled to know that the sun is of a certain size, that he is at a certain distance, and that he rotates upon his axis in a period of about 25⅓ days. These are facts which are not difficult to discover, the instruments now in use being sufficient for their accurate determination. When, however, we consider some other of his characteristics, we have to speculate; and thus his source of heat, of light, what are his spots, and what are numerous other phenomena connected with him, have been subjects of theory from the earliest ages down to the present time. If the sun be merely examined by the unaided eye, it will present usually a brilliant, clear surface, without wrinkle, flaw, or spot. When, however, the telescope is brought to bear, his dark portions become visible, and either singly, or, as is more commonly the case, in groups, are seen those spots of which mention has been already made. Galileo first discovered these spots in April 1611; he announced the fact, and stated that they had a motion across the sun's disc, that they were confined to a small portion of the body of sun on each side of his equator, and that they were very irregular in their form. Scheiner, a German, and another person, a friend of Kepler's, observed the spots at about the same time.

It frequently happens that there is a spot upon the sun of sufficient size to be observed without a telescope, provided that a dark glass be used, and the sun steadily gazed at for about a minute. Such was the case early in September of the present year, two spots being visible at the same time. In the year 1779, a spot also appeared, of a very large size. Many older writers, amongst whom we may quote Plutarch, Abulferagius, Kepler, and others, speak of the sun's light having been strangely diminished for several weeks, a fact which was most probably owing to the accumulation of spots upon his surface. There have also been intervals when the sun has been free from spots; this was the case from 1650 to 1670, and again in 1724. Thus, he appears to have his spotty and clear phases, but these do not return at any regular intervals. Latterly, the disc has been more frequently covered with spots than it was in former times. Some observers have seen a spot burst in pieces, as though it were some brittle substance thrown upon a hard surface.

The size of the spots is sometimes as much as fifty thousand miles in diameter. Their usual appearance is that of a very dark nucleus, surrounded by a lighter portion, as though a solid body with a very dense atmosphere were resting upon the brilliant surface of the sun. Many individuals have been of the opinion that the heat and climate are affected by the spots on the sun. A coincidence of a few hot days and a large spot, and a few cold ones and no spots, has been considered a proof that the spots were increasing the heat of the earth. There have not been a sufficient number of observations yet made upon this subject to warrant any conclusions; for lately, when great heat was expected to result from a number of spots on the sun, it suddenly turned out to be much colder than before they appeared. Conjecture has been very busy in endeavouring to account for these spots upon the sun, for it has been justly concluded that they are intimately connected with his physical condition. When the fact became known that they were occasionally to be seen, the ancient philosophers at once decided that they must be the fuel which supplied the fire of the sun, for they had no ideas of heat or light other than those of fire-light and fire-heat; and so tenaciously did they cling to the belief that the sun was a great ball of fire, that they actually considered that the spots thereon were additional proof of fuel being heaped upon the flame. Others, again, believed that the spots were the thick smoke arising from the burning furnace. Then, and even in late years, it was supposed that the spots were *holes* in the atmosphere of the sun, or in the luminous matter surrounding him; but if his atmosphere be in any manner similar to the atmosphere or gas with which we are acquainted, to form a permanent hole is a matter simply impossible. If, also, the cause of spots be because there is an opening in the luminous matter round the sun, we must at once take for granted that the sun is surrounded by a luminous *solid* matter, or a hole would no more remain in its matter than it does in water. These spots are most common near the equator of the sun, they being rarely seen on any other part of his disc. May not these spots be those impure portions of the sun which, from time to time, are required to be thrown off, and which are too dense to transmit his light through them? We find that impure gases although heavier than the atmosphere, yet will most frequently ascend. May not this be the case with the sun-spots? These impurities may be gathered up by comets, whose visits to the neighbourhood of the sun cannot be objectless or without some cause. And it is not opposed to observed facts, to find that the spots have disappeared after the visit of a comet. Thus, these aërial visitors may be the *dustmen* of the system, who, in after-ages, will have their own part to perform. We can but speculate upon these phenomena; they are matters of discussion, and are open to criticism and supposition.

The cause of the heat of the sun is also a mystery. How this orb can, at the distance of ninety-five millions of miles, give as much heat as he does, is a problem full of interest to every inquirer. The first impression amongst the heathens was, that he must be the locality of the evil spirits. A very small amount of reason would have shewn these ancients that the heat of the sun is dependent upon many other matters besides distance, for even within tropical regions, when the sun is vertical, the tops of the mountains are covered with snow, whilst places situated at a distance of some sixteen thousand feet below these, and consequently further from the sun, are at the same time overpowered with the heat. Thus, it ought to have been known that the sun's heat is derived from the *state of the medium through which his rays are passed.* Thus, if the atmosphere be dense, the heat evolved would be great, whilst, if the atmosphere be like that upon the mountain top, there is far less heat. Again, we may now, by the aid of our telescopes, observe the northern regions of our cousin Mars covered with snow; and when these regions are exposed to the summer rays of the sun, the snows rapidly disappear, a fact which could not happen were there not some other law to regulate heat besides distance, for Mars would, if the sun were like a fire, be too far from the 'fireplace' to have his snow melted by the summer sun. Great is the mystery of sun-light and sun-heat, and we are nearly as far from a solution of their mysteries as were the Egyptians and Romans before us.

Amongst the other phenomena connected with the sun, eclipses may be considered the most striking; these, from the most ancient times, have occupied the attention of all philosophers. It is stated that Protagoras and Anaxagoras were the one exiled, and the other imprisoned, because they stated that the moon's becoming darkened was owing to the shadow of the earth, and that when the sun became darkened, it was owing to the intervention of the moon. It is stated that the Chaldæans had records of eclipses for many centuries before Egypt became famous; and it is narrated by Simplicius that after the conquest of Babylon by Alexander, Callisthenes sent to Aristotle a catalogue of eclipses said to have been observed at that place during a period of 1903 years previously. Although ignorant of the fact that the earth moved round the sun, still it is asserted that the Chaldæans could calculate the eclipses which were to take place. This is by no means improbable, for the *facts* of astronomy and the periodical return of the sun or moon to a particular part of the heavens, are mere matters of observation, and a very close approximation might be made to the time at which an eclipse would occur, although we might be ignorant whether the sun moved round the earth, or the earth round the sun.

The following will be the eclipses of the sun visible in this country for the next ten years: July 18, 1860, at 2 P.M.; December 31, 1861, at 2 P.M.; May 17, 1863, at 6 P.M.; October 19, 1865, at 4 P.M.; October 8, 1866, at 5 P.M.; March 6, 1867, at 8 A.M.; February 23, 1868, at 3 P.M.; December 22, 1870, at 11 A.M.

Eclipses serve as excellent aids to chronology; for given the eclipse, and the locality from which the eclipse was visible, and the astronomer can read off by the clock of the universe when the event occurred. The greatest number of eclipses which can occur in a year is five, and the least number is two. The most rare eclipse is that called an annular eclipse. This phenomenon takes place when the moon passes directly across the sun, and in consequence of appearing a little smaller than the sun, she allows a ring of the latter to appear. There was an annular eclipse of the sun on the 9th October 1847, and also in March 1858. The total eclipse of the sun in 1715 has been ably described by Halley, who received the account from a correspondent who witnessed the phenomenon from Salisbury Plain.

Another striking phenomenon connected with the sun is that, when seen near the horizon, he appears sometimes of a red colour and of a very large size. This appearance is very remarkable, because, instrumentally, he is not found to be increased in diameter. Often, at sea and near equatorial regions, the sun presents this appearance, but it is more frequently seen when the sun is setting than when he is rising. This phenomenon is connected with the state of the atmosphere, and also with a most important law of optics. It is from the same cause that distant objects will sometimes appear as clear and well defined to the unaided eye as when seen with a telescope. This cause, when it becomes better understood, may probably lead to an improvement in telescopes, by which the range of our vision will be considerably extended. It is somewhat singular that the ancient astronomers—such as Alhazen in the 9th century, Roger Bacon, Descartes, &c.—were contented to consider that this large size of the sun, although only occasionally seen, was due to the comparison which resulted from terrestrial objects. They supposed that when the sun was high in the heavens, we could not form an idea of its size; but that when we saw it beside terrestrial objects, then we exaggerated his dimensions. It is evident that these old philosophers had never reasoned upon this explanation; for if the fact had resulted from any comparison with terrestrial objects, every time that the earth was so compared the sun would so appear, whereas it is a rare occurrence to see him of that large size. Also, if in mid-day we had happened to bring the sun in comparison with any object, such as a steeple, then we should have been deluded into the belief that the sun had increased in size; and finally, when the sun set in the sea, and no terrestrial objects intervened, then the apparent fact of the sun's increase in size, which is so common an occurrence in equatorial regions, would require some second cause. Thus, it is evident how weak was this accepted explanation, and, as Kepler used to remark of theories, 'how easily it could be hunted down.' It was, however, a most common characteristic of the past race of astronomers to follow the 'book,' and rarely to reason; this was very quaintly shewn in the time of Galileo, when his jealous opponents endeavoured to prove that he was wrong, *because* that which he stated was unknown to Aristotle, and had not been mentioned in his books.

A very remarkable and unusual phenomenon is that known by the name of 'parhelion'—that is, one or more mock-suns seen in the neighbourhood of the true sun. Several of the ancient writers make mention of mock-suns being seen—Aristotle, Pliny, Scheiner, and others—whilst Hevelius states that seven suns were seen by him at Danzig. They are most common in high latitudes, and the cause has not yet received a clear explanation.

The zodiacal light is another rare but beautiful sight. This is a cone of bright light, which extends obliquely upwards from the horizon. It usually appears about sunrise or sunset, and is seen only in equatorial regions. It has been supposed that this light does not appear when the sun is free from spots. If this be a fact, it is not improbable that as the magnetic and electric needles are usually deflected when there is an aurora, the zodiacal light and the spots upon the sun may have some connection with the electric and magnetic conditions of the earth, and also with the cause of heat and light, and with many of those other mysterious facts, such as earth-currents, &c., which have lately been found to traverse various portions of the globe.

The sun is not, as is popularly supposed, the regulator of our time; he is far too variable in his apparent movements to serve as the time-keeper. Each little twinkling star is a hand of the great clock by which our time is governed, whilst the sun rules the day and regulates the seasons. Owing to the fact that the sun does not always appear to move with the same velocity, it has been found necessary to suppose an imaginary sun to move round the earth, and then to measure time by this theoretical sun, which is, therefore, sometimes before, and sometimes after the real sun; the clock is then said to be 'before the sun' or 'after the sun,' the clock being represented by the mean sun. Although the length of our day and night is 24 hours, still we rotate on our axis in 23 hours 56 minutes and 4 seconds; but owing to the fact of our moving round the sun, we see each celestial body that is outside of our orbit once oftener than we do a body that is inside, as is the sun. Thus, the solar day, as it is called, is longer than a sidereal day. In consequence of the day being divided into 24 hours, and 12 o'clock being that time when the sun is to our south, it follows that the time of sunrise added to sunset will make 12, or very nearly 12. Thus, if we know that the sun rises at 5 A.M., then we may know that he sets at 7 P.M. If the sun rose at 8 A.M., then would he set at 4 P.M.; and so on.

We must, while writing on the regulation of time, take a glance at the establishment in which time is regulated and given out to the nation. The Observatory of Greenwich is the finest institution in the world for the exactitude of its astronomical tables. It is here that time is kept, and it is by means of the observations here made that every ship, whether mercantile or warlike, regulates its chronometers, by means of which it is enabled to discover its longitude when at sea. Greenwich Observatory was built by the command of Charles II.; its site was selected by Wren, and its first astronomer was Flamstead. It is a building entirely devoted to business, its object being to give such an account of the positions of the various planets and stars as may serve as a guide to the surveyor, the navigator, and the man of science. In addition to the purely astronomical portion, there is also a part of the observatory devoted to magnetic investigations. It is here that those curious facts are observed which escape common observation, and have hitherto defied the investigation of all those who have sought for their causes—the magnetic currents which traverse the earth, the variation of the compass, and dip of the needle, the amount of rain which daily and annually falls, and the amount and direction of the wind. These, from the very fact of their subtlety, may be the most important agents in the working of this vast machinery which turns the earth upon its axis, moves it round the sun, and causes rain, wind, storm, heat, and cold, with an apparent irregularity which has defeated prediction, and which may yet work with regularity, and be obedient to certain laws which may become known to philosophers whose fathers are yet unborn.

The principal room in the Greenwich Observatory is the Transit Room. It is from this room that observations are made with regard to the passage of stars, planets, sun, and moon. Each day the sun is examined, to discover if he is in order and regularity; and more true to his time than ever was ardent lover, he at the appointed second shews himself at the correct portion of the heavens. Each night an observer is appointed to watch the passage and to keep a register of the stars. The telescopic instrument is a ponderous-looking affair of iron, made of the strongest materials, and not very dissimilar to an iron cannon. It is regulated every week, troughs of mercury and hair-wires being employed for this purpose. A clock, worked by electricity, faces the instrument, so that an observer can see the time by this clock whilst he is ready to look through the telescope. A very high magnifying-power is not required for an instrument of this description, light being the great desideratum, which is obtained by means of a wide field of view. Next the Transit Room is the Computers' Room, in which the various computers correct and reduce into order the observations of the previous night. Above the Computers' Room is the Chronometer Room, in which about three hundred chronometers are tested and proved at various degrees of heat. Electricity performs an important office in the building. It sends the clock-time to various parts of England; and by its means the transits of stars are indicated, a register being kept on a revolving wheel, which shews upon itself a number of marks, each indicative of the passage of some particular star, the directions being sent 'by message' from the observer.

In conclusion, we may remark that the study of the movements of the celestial bodies, the knowledge of their size, arrangement, and beautiful construction, and a general investigation of those things which are in the heavens above, are things which must tend to elevate the mind, and teach it the grandeur of that Power which created and regulates these vast orbs. Round its orbit of upwards of five hundred millions of miles the earth proceeds as quietly and regularly as though it were merely moving as many inches. The sun itself, with the whole solar system, is moving in space as though it were merely a planet revolving round another sun, and carrying with it its family of satellites in the shape of planets. When we reflect that our own solar system is but as a dot in the universe, and that each twinkling star is a vast sun, with probably its primary and secondary planets, and that those which we can see must be few compared with those which we cannot, we become lost amidst endless space, and awed at the mighty fabric round us. But our wonder is even more excited when we hear that there are men who claim to know all nature's laws, who draw definite bounds between the possible and impossible, and who even go so far as to doubt whether any special Providence is ruling or has created the worlds.

THE SECRET OF THE CAFÉ.

Everybody—that is, everybody that is anybody—knows the Café Talleyrand in Regent Street, how good it is to dine there, and how much better to dine there, if it be possible, at somebody else's expense. Most of us—for we all belong to the Upper Ten Thousand, I hope—have dreamy pleasant recollections of that Temple of the Palate, very much as Mr Alfred Tennyson entertained of the *Arabian Nights*,

> When the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
> In the sails of our minority,

and drove us into heavenly harbours for eating and drinking; before the cares of Paterfamilias overshadowed us, and what we had for dinner was decided with no reference to what would hash up for the children next day. It is not given, indeed, to every one to be a poet, and far less a poet-laureate, but we have most of us some poetry in our souls; we may not all be men of Genius, but we are all, more or less, people of Taste. We know the trail of a woodcock served on toast from marrow, I suppose.

O pleasant ante-chamber through which we used to tread to the Salle d'Heliogabalus, with thy thousand tapering bottles and double-headed pâtés for those who were content to stand and eat, how unlike any pastry-cook's shop wert thou! What Houris were those who stood behind thy counters, and discoursed in broken English, better by far than the integral tongue as minced veal surpasses the fillet! How cool in July days were thy golden-footed marble tables—to a gross fancy, not dissimilar to petrified Oxford brawn—with their heaped-up ices, and 'wafers' more delicate than the thistle-down! How warm in winter were thy brazen stoves! thy soups from the beginning to the end—of the Giraffe's brain and Bison's tail—how comforting and benevolence-inspiring! Shall we ever again escape from mutton-broth and *what they call* brown gravy, we wonder, and once more experience those—— But this is weakness, and unworthy of ourselves.

We remember, then, those little rooms upon the left, the purgatories where those who were too proud to eat at the counter but yet only came for luncheon—bah! how many an excellent dinner has that foolish intermediate institution thrown away!—were wont to look forth with pride upon the rest; and then the passage with the aloe-trees in tubs on either side, and at the end, the Statue and the Fountain; the former was so out of all proportion to the latter, that we used to liken it to some old gentleman who had been dining in the Salle rather too freely, and had come out thither, in undress, with his finger-glass in his hand, with the intention of bathing in it. But the Salle itself—the *sanctum* of the Café Talleyrand—O 'give me a golden pen and heaped-up flowers upon which to lean,' or else I dare not paint it! It is no task for even a *Magnum Bonum* to describe that glittering hall (of eighty feet by forty), those blissful bowers (adapted for any number of guests), the ring of peaceful steel, the silvery clash of transverse fork and spoon, the clink of crystal, and that velvet tread of the innumerable Ganymedes pervading all as sleep pervades a dream. What human voices one did hear there for the most part swelled the harmony—their 'More Moselle,' or, 'Yes, some Curaçoa,' had a certain music in them—but, now and then, a gentleman who loved good eating and (particularly) good drinking 'not wisely but too well,' would have to be 'removed'—that is to say, requested to leave the apartment.

'The next time you want a dinner, sir,' our head-waiter would on such occasions remark to the offending person, 'you will find it at the *Cat and Pumpkin* round the corner, sir; but not here, sir—not here.' If that gentleman could possibly have been anything else than what he was, he would, I am confident, have been a bishop. There is a beautiful legend extant respecting this dignitary, who has been at the Café Talleyrand for three generations or so, which I will take the liberty to repeat, although it has been current for years, and applied falsely to chiefs of other establishments. A gentleman, still young, and only melancholy in expression so far as it is fashionable to be so, once stepped into the Salle d'Heliogabalus, and ordered a Dinner; not a mere collection of good dishes, be it understood, but that judicious assortment of them which alone is worthy of that title. He was dressed to admiration; his hair and moustache were miracles of the art of the *coiffeur;* and his hands were whiter even than the waiters', though he was attended upon by two of the most gentlemanly of them, as a man of his distinguished taste deserved to be.

He began with *absinthe*, and concluded with a glass of *eau-de-vie;* and throughout the meal, took the right wine in the right place, and plenty of it. The head-waiter was so impressed with his judgment that he actually came out of his bower, and took the last dish away with his own superlative fingers, and the dined person acknowledged the attention with a graceful bow. It was evident, however, that this excellent judge of what was good for him, had but an indifferent digestion—with such apparent inconsistency are the gifts of fortune distributed!—for he sighed heavily when he had concluded his repast, and while he was imbibing his bottle of claret. Presently he touched the little silver bell—or the bell that looks like silver—which pertains to every table in the Salle d'Heliogabalus, and the waiter was at his elbow before it had ceased to tinkle. There was now a mournful indecision in the dined person's countenance, which, in a meaner man, would have signified something like intoxication, but it presently disappeared. 'Bring another bottle of claret,' said he, 'and be sure that it comes from the same bin;' and the waiter brought it.

The gentleman had been four hours dining and drinking, when he was heard once more to sigh deeply and to tinkle the silver bell again.

'Waiter,' said he, languidly, but with that politeness to his social inferiors that never deserts a real *bon-vivant*, though gluttons possess it not—'waiter, be so good as to fetch a policeman.'

'A policeman, sir!' replied Ganymede. 'Most certainly, sir.' And off he hurried to the head-waiter to know what the strange wine was, of which he would not have had the guest suppose him ignorant for worlds. The head-waiter understood the difficulty at once. He procured the gentleman's bill—it was L.3, 17s. 6d., as far as I remember, exclusive of attendance—paid it himself, and got it receipted.

'If I understand your last order aright,' observed he, in his musical whisper, 'you have no money about you?'

The gentleman nodded blandly.

'You have probably left your purse at home?'

'Alas! no; I have no home: I am a ruined man, in fact; but I have been accustomed to dine well, and was determined to do so once again before I was locked up for good: that is all.'

'Sir,' replied our head-waiter, with emotion, 'I sympathise with you—you are a man who deserves a good dinner; and you must permit *me* to be your creditor upon this occasion.'

Whether this best of Samaritans ever got reimbursed for that act of charity, I cannot tell; but if the esteem of all who know him can repay a man for a pecuniary sacrifice, I am sure that our head-waiter has been paid in full.

If the gentleman had taken the *eau-de-vie* first, and the *absinthe* last, it would, of course, have been a different matter.

But the circumstance which used to awaken our young astonishment most respecting the Café Talleyrand was this. Once, twice, thrice, ay, half-a-dozen times at least, we observed an elderly female dining by herself in the Salle d'Heliogabalus, whose appearance would have certainly led people to imagine that she would have found herself infinitely more at home at the *Cat and Pumpkin*. *She* certainly did not belong to the Upper Ten Thousand, nor the Upper Hundred Thousand either. It was no use calling her plump, for she was downright fat; nor short, for she was unmistakably 'stumpy;' while if you had said her hair was auburn, you would have told a fib. She wore under her bonnet, but yet plainly visible, a broad fillet of velvet, with a brooch in it almost as big as the cups which jugglers wear on their foreheads to catch balls in. She had a loud voice too—for the Salle d'Heliogabalus—and asked for the dishes she wanted in the most execrable French we ever listened to. She also called the waiters 'lads,' and made them 'look alive' whenever she considered them to be dilatory. She was the only person that our head-waiter—to whom she always courtesied when she left the room—could never make out, and, indeed, he went in much mysterious fear of her. The remarkable thing about her was, that she knew how to dine as well as anybody, and absolutely sent away some potato-fritters upon one occasion as being insufficiently crisp. She preferred, too, somewhat outlandish and unusual dishes—*Soupe à l'Aigle* and *Côtelettes de la Licorne*—over which she would smack her lips with a rather obtrusive appreciation. She never ate of the same delicacy twice; and having discovered that her quotations from the *carte* excited the public merriment, she confined herself to laying a dumpy finger upon the required dish, and saying: 'Now, I want some of *that*, lad, and mind it's done juicy, and to a turn.'

On the first occasion of her visiting the Café Talleyrand, she excited an immense sensation by taking warm ale with her dinner; and would afterwards have had a glass of gin and water, if such a sacrilege could have been permitted to her in such a place. 'You're dear, sir,' observed she to the head-waiter as she left the Salle—having paid, by the by, no less than a shilling's worth of her bill in the copper coinage of the realm—'you're uncommon dear, that's certain; but there's no denying you are good.' There was a great crowd of diners there the next day, to see this wonderful woman, but she did not appear again for a week or so; and, indeed, a considerable interval always elapsed between her visits. This secret of the Café gave the Salle d'Heliogabalus an additional charm to us for years, and was only disclosed to us the other day in the most accidental manner.

We have a godfather—an eminently spiritual person, we have no doubt, but not demonstratively so; he was chosen by our parents, we fancy, as much because he was confirmed in bachelor habits, and had a nice little property of his own, as for any other reasons. This gentleman dowered us with a silver mug at our baptism, and a silver fork, and spoon, and knife, as soon as we got old enough to use such things; and his benevolence towards us even now evinces itself in a similar fashion. He does not present us with such valuable utensils, indeed, any longer, but he gives us the eating and drinking for which they were but the conveniences: he supplies us with the end instead of the means; and I hope he will supply us with the 'means' some day: he asks us now and then, in short, to partake of a thoroughly good dinner. He doesn't invite our wife, because he says that females don't understand such things; and, indeed, we believe she is quite as happy (dear love!) with her four darling children at home and the cold mutton, as she would be with his five courses, and rather unreliable temper. There is no show, no parade about our godfather's dinners whatever. He has no man-cook, nor even a man-servant; indeed, his income is not large, only, as it is spent *entirely* upon good living, it of course does considerable things in that direction. All the stories of his having parted with the sum-total of his property to secure a magnificent table as long as he lived, are nonsense, and never so much as spoiled our appetite at any time. He seldom sends us a written invitation—observing that such a course is not fair to those who can give him dinners in return—but when he meets us accidentally, in the street or elsewhere, he is almost certain unctuously to whisper something like the following: 'Charley, my boy, I have got some Aylesbury ducks to-day at 6·30, and a bit of Severn salmon, Charley; will you come?' At which, of course, we reply: 'Thank you, my good sir;' and privately lament that we have taken breakfast. The last time this occurred, he was looking very miserable. It was a wet day, late in the autumn, and he was muffled up to the chin in capes and shawls, had goloshes on, and carried an umbrella of immense extent, under which he staggered like a ship with too much canvas; and yet it seemed he was in want of a cab. 'A cab, Charley,' groaned he as we met him in our dreadnought overcoat; 'get me a cab, my boy; you don't know what depends on it.' Nevertheless, we did know what depended upon our pleasing our godfather very well, however; so, leaving him under shelter of a doorway, we ran off, and brought him back a Hansom, into which he bade us step, and carried us to his house.

'O Charley,' moaned he, and we fancied we saw tears steal down his aged cheek as he did so, 'there's a brace of grouse dropping to pieces in my larder that must be eaten to-day; and dash my buttons, sir' (he used a much stronger expression than *that*, however), 'if I have not got such a cold that *I can't taste!*'

It was really quite affecting to see the despair and agony of our respected godfather at this misfortune. 'It is my opinion,' continued he, 'that all doctors are most unmitigated humbugs; my medical attendant, to whom I have just been for his advice, has informed me that nothing can be done, sir, absolutely nothing in a case like mine; I must have patience and a mustard plaster, he says, and in a day or two, forsooth, I shall get the use of my palate as before. Heavens! as if those grouse would keep a day or two! I tell you, they fell from their legs, Sarah informs me, this very morning—always keep grouse hanging by their legs, young man, and when they drop, it is high time to eat 'em; and the same with peaches—it's a terrible blow, of course; but I am no dog in the manger. You shall taste them, my boy, and I will try not to hate you for it.'

We sent home to tell our wife we were engaged out, and were shewn into a bedroom to wash our hands. Presently, in came our godfather in his shirt-sleeves, and with a radiant countenance. 'Upon my honour, Charley, there is hope still. *I tasted the soap*—not completely, indeed, but enough to know what it was. Where's *your* soap? *No.* Gone again, or perhaps my soap has a stronger flavour. *Why don't I smell instead?* Why, because my olfactory nerves are in such a state that I couldn't tell a polecat from attar of roses.'

So, hovering upon the border-land of hope, our venerable friend came down to the dining-room. 'Can't taste the soup,' cried he angrily—and he had got such a cold that he called it soub, poor fellow!—'can't taste the soub one bit: take my plate away, Eliza, instantly. What soub is it, Charley? *White soub!* Of course, it's white soub; I have got my eyes left, though everything else is gone; what *sort* of white soub, man? *Palestine!* The deuce!' I thought my godfather would have wept, for *Palestine* was his favourite *potage*. The fish was dismissed in a like unsatisfactory manner. 'By Job!' (he meant Jove) cried the old gentleman in an ecstasy, 'I can smell those grouse!' (And, truth to say, he must have had a very bad cold, indeed, if he couldn't.) 'What fluctuating things these delicate organs of ours are! Now—Eliza, shut that door instantly, or I give you warning upon the spot—now, be very careful, Charley; don't touch me, don't excite me, don't do anything to make me sneeze, and I shall do yet.'

Our godfather ate three helps of grouse in total silence, and with the air of the intensest gratitude and appreciation. 'You're a good fellow, Charley,' cried he, when he had done; 'I have enjoyed myself fifty per cent. better than I had expected to do. Do you ever lose *your* taste when you have a cold?'

'No, sir,' replied we, modestly; 'but it is very often thrown away upon boiled mutton.'

'Good,' said my godfather—'very good, as an application; but you are aware that the idea is not original.'

And so, as usual at that table, our conversation turned upon anecdotes of eating and drinking.

Then we told him of the secret of the Café Talleyrand, and of the vulgar woman who used to dine by herself in the Salle d'Heliogabalus. The old gentleman laughed till he cried, and then he sneezed for about twenty minutes, after which I thought he would never have done blowing his nose.

'Dope' (he meant 'Don't,' but his cold was dreadfully increased by the above exertions), 'Dope you know who thap was? Thap was Thara, down stairb. That was my coop Thara, Charley. She never could make *Soupe à l'Aigle* nor *Côtelettes de la Licorne* to my tathte: and how was she to, poor thib, since she had never tathted them good herself? Tho I thent her to the Café Talleyrand, and bid her order for her dinner whatever things she did not know how to coop. She is as good as any man-coop in England now. That's your secret of the Café. No more clabet, dank you. My tathte is quite gone again; and I am dankful to have had it when I did.'

SELF-HELP.

A HANDY and amusing volume on *Self-help*, by the author of the *Life of George Stephenson*, has lately been published.* Its main value consists in an enforcement of the distinct principle, that, unless there be stimulus to exertion from within, help is of little use, and may in reality be enfeebling and hurtful. As a general truth, neither laws nor institutions, neither friends nor acquaintances, neither schools nor books, can render any active aid in pushing people on. The utmost that anything exterior to ourselves can do, is to give us freedom to think and act. The want of a proper conviction on this primary point leads to much disappointment. How many men in a humble position are seen looking for something that is to take place by which they are to cut a figure, while all the time they are neglecting the very means which can alone advance them one way or another. 'It is every day becoming more clearly understood,' says Mr Smiles, 'that the function of government is negative and restrictive; being resolvable principally into protection—protection of life, liberty, and property. . . . There is no power of law that can make the idle man industrious, the thriftless provident, or the drunken sober; though every individual can be each and all of these if he will, by the exercise of his own free powers of action and self-denial.'

A recognition of these truths, however, only comes with an awakening intelligence. Just in proportion to the ability to think, is the power to act; and it is only when this ability has been attained, that the man can be said to be properly developed. Exempted in a remarkable manner from official interference, and but slightly affected by social considerations, also favoured by a healthful and bracing climate, the English, as a people, are placed in circumstances peculiarly favourable for promoting mental along with bodily activity, on which account it seems to be very much the fault of the individual if he continues doomed to inaction and obscurity. Undoubtedly, not a small share of disappointment as regards an advance in circumstances, may spring from the want of courage to encounter a certain hazard. Shrinking from taking a step which common sense would appear to recommend, a man allows the world to walk over him; with all his intelligence, he is found in the end of his days precisely in the position in which he originally set out in his career. It is true, all cannot reach distinction; but within each of us are faculties and tastes susceptible of improvement; and what is clearly desirable, is the wish to make the very best of the faculties and tastes with which we are endowed—leaving consequences in the hands of Providence. Perhaps, not devoid of the wish to do what is right in this matter, some commit the mistake of looking for sudden and great moves in fortune; whereas, it may be learned from a thousand biographies that distinction has been attained only by simple means through a long course of patient exertion and endurance.

We are in the habit of ascribing high accomplishment in the prosecution of art, science, or literature to an inherent faculty called genius, while those who seem to have gained distinction through the efficacy of this natural gift, uniformly repudiate the notion that they are indebted to anything like genius, and ascribe their whole success simply to earnest and persevering diligence. 'Some,' says our author, 'have even defined genius to be only common sense intensified. A distinguished teacher and president of a college spoke of it as the power of making efforts. John Foster held it to be the power of lighting one's own fire. Buffon said of genius—it is patience. . . . Newton said: "If I have done the public any service, it is due to nothing but industry and patient thought." Sir Joshua Reynolds was such a believer in the force of industry, that he held that excellence in art, "however expressed by genius, taste, or the gift of Heaven, may be acquired." Writing to Barry, he said: "Whoever is resolved to excel in painting, or indeed any other art, must bring all his mind to bear upon that one object from the moment that he rises till he goes to bed." And on another occasion he said: "Those who are resolved to excel must go to their work, willing or unwilling, morning, noon, and night: they will find it no play, but very hard labour."' There is truth in these remarks of Sir Joshua and others, but probably not the whole truth. No doubt, distinction is not obtainable without intense application, but at the outset, as one would think, there must be the capacity to labour along with the resolute will to overcome obstacles—in other words, there must be a quality in the mind susceptible of being urged into activity, without which a life-long struggle for success may be fruitless. Such we assume to be the more correct explanation; yet so persistently is it reasserted by successful men of alleged genius, that they owe everything to labour, that we are entitled to press this view of the matter on the attention of youthful aspirants. Genius or no genius, all adventitious circumstances go for nothing, unless a man sets doggedly to work. The art of continuance is indispensable for proficiency in all arts. Deficient in continuance, the cleverest are 'outstripped in the race of life by the diligent, and even the dull.'

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* *Self-help.* By Samuel Smiles. London, Murray 1 vol. 12mo.

The bulk of Mr Smiles's work consists in semi-biographic sketches and brief occasional notices of persons who have attained to celebrity and fortune by self-exertion. Many of his examples are not new, but others are less generally known, and the whole are grouped in such a way as to furnish very agreeable reading. We may select a few of the more novel passages. Speaking of the originally humble circumstances of men of note, reference is made to 'Michael Faraday, the son of a poor blacksmith, who was in early life apprenticed to a bookbinder, and worked at his trade until he reached his twenty-second year; he now occupies the very first rank as a philosopher, excelling even his master, Sir Humphry Davy, in the art of lucidly expounding the most difficult and abstruse points in natural science.' Our author very properly remarks that the House of Commons has always possessed a number of self-made men. 'When the late Joseph Brotherton, member for Salford, in the course of the discussion on the Ten Hours Bill, detailed with true pathos the hardships and fatigues to which he had been subjected when working as a factory-boy in a cotton-mill, and described the resolution which he had then formed, that if ever it was in his power, he would endeavour to ameliorate the condition of that class, Sir James Graham rose immediately after him, and declared, amid the cheers of the House, that he did not before know that Mr Brotherton's origin had been so humble, but that it rendered him more proud than he had ever before been of the House of Commons, to think that a person risen from that condition should be able to sit side by side, on equal terms, with the hereditary gentry of the land. There is a member of the present House of Commons whom we have heard introducing his recollections of past times with the words: "When I was working as a weaver-boy at Norwich;" and there are many more who have sprung from conditions equally humble.'

In the depths of society, unknown, yet happy in the prosecution of departments of science, there must be many men of energetic purpose, of whom the following is a pleasing example: 'Not long ago, Sir Roderick Murchison discovered at Thurso, in the far north of Scotland, a profound geologist, in the person of a baker there, named Robert Dick. When Sir Roderick called upon him at the bakehouse in which he baked and earned his bread, Robert Dick delineated to him, by means of flour upon a board, the geographical features and geological phenomena of his native county, pointing out the imperfections in the existing maps, which he had ascertained by travelling over the country in his leisure hours. On further inquiry, Sir Roderick ascertained that the humble individual before him was not only a capital baker and geologist, but a first-rate botanist. "I found," said the Director-general of the Geographical Society, "to my great humiliation, that this baker knew infinitely more of botanical science, ay, ten times more than I did; and that there were only some twenty or thirty specimens of flowers which he had not collected. Some he had obtained as presents, some he had purchased, but the greater portion had been accumulated by his industry, in his native county of Caithness; and the specimens were all arranged in the most beautiful order, with their scientific names affixed." William Smith, the father of English geology, began life under circumstances of a kind as adverse as the Caithness baker; and his rise was owing altogether to diligent application.

It says not a little for the energy of the English character, that young men belonging to the middle, and even higher classes, are often seen to be quite as anxious to go through hard work, and as enduring, as if they had sprung from the humblest parentage. Comparatively few persons are aware of the hard work habitually gone through by lawyers in good practice—men who either born to, or having realised a competence, might, if they chose, retire to a life of indulgent leisure. Without the capacity and will to labour for fifteen or eighteen hours a day, no one need ever think of attaining distinction as a statesman: 'Such are Palmerston and Derby, Russell and Disraeli, Gladstone and Bulwer. These men have had the benefit of no Ten Hours Bill, but have often, during the busy season of parliament, worked "double shift," almost day and night. One of the most illustrious of such workers in modern times was unquestionably the late Sir Robert Peel. He possessed in an extraordinary degree the power of continuous intellectual labour, nor did he spare himself. His career, indeed, presented a remarkable example of how much a man of comparatively moderate powers can accomplish by means of assiduous application and indefatigable industry. During the forty years that he held a seat in parliament, his labours were prodigious. He was a most conscientious man, and whatever he undertook to do, he did thoroughly.'

The most remarkable instance of a prodigiously hard-working statesman is that of Lord Brougham, who, though now in his eighty-second year, leads as laborious a life as he did when he was a young man. Applying himself to law, literature, politics, and science, he has achieved distinction in them all. 'How he contrived it, has been to many a mystery. Once, when Sir Samuel Romilly was requested to undertake some new work, he excused himself by saying that he had no time, "but," he added, "go with it to that fellow Brougham, he seems to have time for everything." The secret of it was, that he never left a minute unemployed; withal, he possessed a constitution of iron. When arrived at an age at which most men would have retired from the world to enjoy their hard-earned leisure, perhaps to doze away their time in an easy-chair, Lord Brougham commenced and prosecuted a series of elaborate investigations as to the laws of light, and he submitted the results to the most scientific audiences that Paris and London could muster. About the same time, he was passing through the press his admirable sketches of the *Men of Science and Literature of the Reign of George III.*, and taking his full share of the law-business and the political discussions in the House of Lords. Sydney Smith once recommended him to confine himself to only the transaction of so much business as three strong men could get through. But such was Brougham's love of work—long become a habit—that no amount of application seems to have been too great for him; and such was his love of excellence, that it has been said of him, that if his station in life had been only that of a shoeblack, he would never have rested satisfied until he had become the best shoeblack in England.'

So, also, with Bulwer Lytton, a ceaseless labourer as a poet, novelist, dramatist, historian, essayist, orator, and politician. 'The industry of Bulwer,' says Mr Smiles, 'is entitled to all the greater praise, that it has been entirely self-imposed. To hunt, and shoot, and live at ease—to frequent operas, and clubs, and Almack's, enjoying the variety of London sight-seeing, morning-calls, and parliamentary small-talk during the "season," and then off to the country mansion, with its well-stocked preserves, and its thousand delightful outdoor pleasures—to travel abroad, to Paris, Vienna, or Rome—all this is excessively attractive to a lover of pleasure and a man of fortune, and by no means calculated to make a man buckle to steady, continuous labour of any kind. Yet these pleasures, all within his reach, Bulwer must, as compared with men born to similar estate, have denied himself in assuming the position and pursuing the career of a literary man. Like Byron, his first effort was poetical (*Weeds and Wild Flowers*), and a failure. His second was a novel (*Falkland*), and it proved a failure too. A man of weaker stuff would have dropped authorship; but Bulwer had pluck and perseverance; so he worked on, determined to succeed. He was incessantly industrious, read prodigiously, and from failure went courageously onwards to success. *Pelham* followed *Falkland* within a year, and the remainder of Bulwer's literary life, now extending over a period of thirty years, has been a succession of triumphs.' Little do the ordinary run of operatives, who toil at the utmost but sixty hours a week, know of the racking mental labour which has been endured by those men, of whom Bulwer, Scott, and some other popular writers are among the more brilliant examples.

We cordially recommend Mr Smiles's interesting volume as a present for youth, and as a suitable acquisition for town and village libraries.

A STROLL THROUGH THE TEMPLE.

The Temple—the dear, dozy, dingy old Temple—not Solomon's Temple, nor that of Diana, nor of double-headed Janus—but the Temple of the Red-cross Knights, the Temple of Chaucer and Spenser, of Oliver Goldsmith and Charles Lamb—

> Those bricky towers
> The which on Themmes' back doth ride,
> Where now the lawyers have their bowers.

How one's heart warms towards it! In all the wide circumference of London, where will you find such another lovable spot? There is a never-failing charm in the very contrast which it offers to the streets which surround it. There, in the very heart of the great metropolis, on the borders of one of its most thronged highways, stands this little congregation of antique courts, so still, so drowsy, so inanimate, that coming upon it, straight from the din and bustle of Fleet Street, it seems as if the visitor had suddenly passed from the actual world into the enchanted confines of some sleeping palace. The hubbub of the streets is hushed to a gentle murmur; and the splash of the little fountain among the trees, or the pattering of occasional footsteps, only sound

> Like hints and echoes of the world
> To spirits folded in the womb.

And then, to crown the whole, there is the garden with its fresh green lawn, and trim walks, and the terrace, with a little summer-house at either end, and benches here and there tempting to repose, and the river beyond, sparkling in the sunshine, and all alive with leisurely barges and flitting steam-boats. Altogether, it is a delightful place to spend an hour in a summer afternoon; but in the autumn or winter, it must be owned its aspect is rather lugubrious. Then the fog steams up from the river, creeping from court to court, and enveloping the whole place in its dense yellow vapour; the garden is strewn with withered leaves, and the breeze sighs piteously through the skeleton trees. All day long there are candles burning in many of the chambers, and shedding a dismal glimmering light for the clerks to scribble their papers at; and the few people who are about loom through the mist more like ghosts than substantial creatures of flesh and blood. At such a season, one may be pardoned for questioning Charles Lamb's dictum, that 'the Temple is the most elegant spot in the metropolis;' and indeed it has claims enough on our regard in the thousand-and-one associations of the past which cling to its dingy, smoke-grimed walls, without insisting on its elegance. At every step you come upon some memorial of 'the great of old;' and in a ramble through its courts, your thoughts are made to traverse many ages of our history. As you pace the 'Round' of the Temple church, and gaze upon the cross-legged effigies of the old knights, you are involuntarily carried back to the distant days when the green fields stretched on either hand down to the brink of the stately and then pellucid stream, and when the towers of the Temple stood embowered in trees, a pleasant rural retreat for the monkish warriors, the clank of whose mailed hose you can almost fancy you hear ringing on the pavement. Or if you are a reader of the old comedies, you cannot fail to recall the livelier and more bustling scene which the Round used to present when it had come to serve as a sort of law market-place and fashionable lounge. There are the lawyers, each at his particular pillar, deep in consultation with his clients, or dictating cases to his pupils; under the galleries, a busy promenade is going on—some waiting for friends they have appointed to meet; others attracted thither in the hope of picking up some fresh gossip of the day, to be retailed with much gusto and exaggeration at the evening coffee-house; while lounging on the benches, or stalking dismally up and down, may be seen some of the 'peripatetic philosophers of the Temple Walk' (with whom, no doubt, a barmecide meal at the table of the 'cross-legged knights, their hosts,' was about as much in vogue as a dinner with Duke Humphrey in Paul's Walk); and mingled with these, most probably, one or two choice specimens from Alsatia hard by, conspicuous amongst the crowd, who give them a wide berth, for their shaggy, unkempt locks, greasy jerkins, and 'long scandalous iron swords.'

Across the quadrangle, there is Middle Temple Hall. It stands to-day much as it stood a couple of centuries ago; and when the members of the honourable community to whom it belongs sit down to dinner, they sit much as they used to sit in the old days—the benches perched at the table on the raised platform, and the rest distributed in messes of four round the hall—but what a change has come over the spirit of the gathering! On what scenes of wild merry-makings must these old rafters have looked down; how they must have trembled and echoed with the din of feast-day brawls and mad-cap maskings; with the applause and laughter of the audience that first listened to Viola's touching recital of her love, or shook their sides at the 'most excellent fooling' of Malvolio;* or with the swearing and fighting that arose from the quarrels of the dicing-table, and rendered necessary the regulation that no one should carry into the dining-hall any other weapon than a dagger or knife with which to cut his meat. Formerly, according to Fortescue, a student of the Inn was not only inducted into the mysteries of the law, but was taught 'to dance, to sing, and play on instruments on ferial-days, and to study divinity on the festivals.' Lord Chancellor Davies, when an 'utter' barrister, spent his leisure in the composition of a couple of poems, one on *The Art of Dancing*, in which we suppose he was a proficient; and the other on *The Immortality of the Soul.* Indeed, in those days it would seem to have been as indispensable that the occupants of the bench should have a graceful carriage in the dance, and be able to lead off with credit a Christmas brawl, as that they should be well up in the rules and precedents of legal lore. Sir Christopher Hatton, we know, was one of the best dancers of his time, and practised his steps to some purpose, according to the scandalous chronicle of that period:

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* *Twelfth Night* was acted here in 1601-2, so far as we know, for the first time.

> His bushy beard and shoe-strings green,
> His high-crowned hat and satin doublet,
> Moved the stout heart of England's queen,
> Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

For the lover of literature, the Temple has a special attraction, from the number of eminent writers who frequented it, and with whose memories it is indissolubly associated. With the old dramatists, it was a favourite place of residence. Beaumont (of the famous playwright firm), Ford, Marston, Southerne, Wycherley—up whose stairs the Duchess of Cleveland is said to have been seen tripping disguised as a milliner—and Congreve, are all stated to have had chambers there. Fielding, too, was a resident for a short time at the outset of his career in the metropolis; and we can fancy him 'with inked ruffles and a wet towel round his head, dashing off articles at midnight for the *Covent Garden Journal*, with the printer's boy asleep in the passage.' Everybody knows Dr Johnson's staircase in Inner Temple Lane, and must have rejoiced that the alterations in that quarter are not to interfere with the rooms where the 'giant had his den.' It is pleasant to fancy the ponderous old man rolling down the lane to his chambers, religiously touching all the posts on his way, and carefully picking up the scraps of orange-peel. Boswell had lodgings hard by in Farrar's Buildings, at the foot of the lane. Somewhere in the Temple—Mr Southey tells us only that it was in an airy situation—Cowper lived for some dozen of years, which he used afterwards to say, in his morbid way, were spent in an 'uninterrupted course of sinful indulgence.' It was during his residence in the Temple, that one dull November day, in a fit of religious melancholy, he attempted suicide, first resolving to take laudanum, but having the cup a score of times twitched away from his lips by some invisible hand; and then to hang himself with his garter, which, tied to the top of his bed, slipped off one time, and broke it down the next, and being the third time fastened to the angle of the door, kept him suspended till he became unconscious, but snapped before death ensued.

But of all the names associated with the Temple, there are none which one likes better to connect it with than those of Goldsmith and Lamb, the two kindliest and most lovable writers in the whole range of our republic of letters. Goldsmith resided there from 1764 to the day of his death, and during that time changed his lodgings three times. He came first to a humble garret in the library staircase in Garden Court, which he shared with Jeffs, the butler of the Temple. The next year he did shift to better chambers, a story lower down, in the same staircase; and it was there Parson Scott, Lord Sandwich's chaplain, called on him to bargain for his services as a government pamphleteer. Goldsmith was then forty years of age, had written *The Traveller* and *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and was yet forced to drudge at the meanest, worst-paid journey-work for the booksellers, to save himself from starving in 'the streets where Butler and Otway starved before him.' 'And yet, would you believe it,' Parson Scott used to say, 'he was so absurd as to answer: "I can earn as much as will supply my wants without writing for any party;" and so I left him in his garret.'

The success of the *Good-natured Man* enabled him to purchase a suite of rooms in Brick Court, at No. 2, up two pair of stairs. In the flat below, Mr Blackstone, busy with the fourth volume of his *Commentaries*, was sadly put about with the racket carried on at nights above his head. One Monday, in April 1774, there was a cluster of mourners on the staircase—needy Irish adventurers, and miserable outcast women—weeping for the early death of the tender-hearted man, who never forgot, amidst the pressure of his own griefs and difficulties, to be kind and charitable.

'Cheerful Crown Office Row,' facing the gardens, was the place of Charles Lamb's 'kindly engendure,' and there he spent the first seven years of his life, playing about the quaint old courts, and gazing with reverence at the solemn benchers as they took their afternoon promenade on the terrace. It is not difficult to trace the influence upon his mind of this early residence in such a spot in the tone and character of many of his essays. Afterwards, in his middle age, he came back to the Temple, and lived with his sister in Inner Temple Lane, where he spent some of the happiest days of his life, and where those glorious Wednesday-evening gatherings used to be held, which Hazlitt and Talfourd give such glowing descriptions of, as rivalling in intellectual enjoyment the aristocratic *réunions* of Holland House.

Call the Temple dingy, nay, as dismal as you like. But what though it is? Its shades are hallowed by association with the authors of the *Vicar* of Goldsmith and Elia's *Essays;* and the pleasant memories of two such men are sufficient to make a sunshine anywhere.

THE VISION OF DAVID.

My waking soul flew to my God and my King
When the Morn on the mountain unfolded her wing;
I longed for His smile, and I asked for the boon
When my bosom beat high in the fulness of noon;
My prayer left the world on the gold-wingèd ray,
When my muffled heart followed dead Evening away,
When life moved as softly as dew on the sod,
The pinions of Night bore my spirit to God.

I saw in my vision the book of despair,
And the sins the Omniscient had chronicled there,
His arrows of judgment, the bow of His might
For the robber of life and the hater of light;
My fear-stricken wing would have fallen from above,
But I struck in my terror the door of His love;
There wildly I dashed till He lifted its bars,
And my spirit sang praise in His temple of stars.

R. R.

On Saturday, the 7th of January 1860, *will be commenced in this Journal,*

A STORY, entitled

THE BATEMAN HOUSEHOLD, AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF 'STORIES AND SKETCHES,' &c. &c.

To be continued every week until completed.

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GERMAN GASTRONOMY.

THE middle classes in England were, some time ago, making a great fuss about the hardship of simple cookery, the misfortune of being condemned to eat perennial roast-beef, and sempiternal boiled chickens. I just wish the malcontents were set down with their families in a town of Southern Germany, and consigned to the tender, or rather the tough mercies of a *Köchin* of the Vaterland. To say that the German meat is bad, and the cooking simply abominable, is greatly to understate the case. On our first arrival at Hohenbraten, we had our meals at a first-rate café, and then the worst we had to contend with was a somewhat exaggerated version of Sir Francis Head's most correct formula of German cookery: 'Every dish that is not sour is greasy, and every dish that is not greasy is sour.' I think we found the dishes at the café pretty generally to combine both attributes.

But, especially where there is a family to be fed, one cannot be perpetually going out of doors for one's dinner; so, as soon as we were provided with what her advertisement in the *Tageblatt* described as a 'brave solid maiden, that all cooking, ironing, and household business good could do,' we resolved to have our dinner prepared, as a school-boy of the party expressed it, 'on our own hook.' Alas! that, as we soon found, was a hook on which hung beef tougher than the soles of our stoutest shoes, and mutton resembling nothing in this world so much as a compound of glue and fiddle-strings. I could not imagine how they contrived to have the beef so very, very tough and coarse of fibre, until I discovered that oxen, being universally employed in the district as beasts of burden, the economical farmers use them as such until quite superannuated and past their labour, and when that consummation arrives, they convert them into beef. As to the sheep, they are reared chiefly for their wool, and when shorn, are turned adrift, poor things, to stand in stony, grass-denuded fields, until the butcher's knife releases them from the pains of a lingering death by inanition, and sends them in the form of *Hammelfleisch* to inflict dyspeptic horrors on the good folks of Hohenbraten. This, however, applies only to the English residents, who, accustomed to the tender, succulent, and wholesome mutton of the British Isles, will scarcely condescend to apply that name to the dreadful stuff which is all they can get in its place in Southern Germany. As to the natives, they seem to have a forty-ostrich-power of assimilation and digestion. In the cherry season, when the finest kinds of that fruit cost at Hohenbraten only a penny a pound, the consumption by all classes is, of course, enormous, and I often wondered what became of the stones, scarcely a stray one being visible on the otherwise littered pavement. It was as puzzling a problem as that which has often been propounded, and never, so far as I know, satisfactorily solved, 'What becomes of all the lost pins?' However, touching the cherry-stones, I ascertained that the Germans invariably swallow them, as they also do gooseberry-skins, and the seeds and skins of grapes. As to paring an apple or a pear, the Vaterland would no more think of doing it than of using a sugar-tongs or salt-spoon. If in any geological revolution of the globe, the South Germans should ever in the remote future obtain a sea-coast, and with it the best things connected with the ocean—namely, oysters, cockles, crabs, and lobsters—I am quite convinced they would swallow not only the crustacea, but their shells too.

'Why does not the *gnädige Frau* order *sauer kraut* for dinner?' said my Köchin one day.

'Oh,' I replied, 'we English don't like it.'

'But,' was the rejoinder, 'it is so delicious, so delicate.'

This old cook, by the way, is a character. She came to me with a strong recommendation from the Graf von Blank, in whose house she had lived for five years, and who ranks among the highest aristocracy of the kingdom. I felt rather afraid of introducing such a functionary into my quiet unpretending household; but as the wages she asked were very moderate—not quite L.5 British per annum—and as she undertook to do everything, literally to become a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, I thought there would be no harm in giving her a trial. The first morning that she made her *début* with the preparation of breakfast, she was not intending to lay a cloth at all; and when I suggested her doing so, as a usual preliminary to the morning-meal, she complied, but with great astonishment. Leaving the room, she presently reappeared with three cups standing on plates—no saucers—one knife, and one spoon, which she regarded as a full and sufficient provision for four persons. Similar table-arrangements actually prevail amongst even those of the higher classes of the South Germans; two or three grown persons, or any amount of children, eating off one plate, and drinking from one cup. Our popular prejudice in favour of each individual having his own proper table utensil is regarded as merely an evidence of British pride and selfishness. However, the cloth was at length laid, and the difficult attainment of really boiling water achieved; that precious fluid making its appearance in a fat clumsy kettle with an apoplectic spout, which resignedly took up its position on the top of a little round black stand, serving as a haven of refuge for a tiny spirit-lamp. With the aid of the pure delicious bread which is nowhere better than in Hohenbraten, sweet fresh butter, and excellent tea from Frankfort, breakfast was really a satisfactory meal, not to mention that it was accompanied by a plate of such sliced sausage as can never be had out of the Vaterland, where truly, one would imagine, that these fat round triumphs of gastronomy, varying in size from the diameter of a cigar to that of a cannon-ball, are indigenous to the soil, or that, as an old gardener at Killarney said of the arbutus trees, 'they wor planted promiscus, and grows spontinus.' The morning-meal being ended at the primitive hour of half-past seven, the real tug of war begun—'the dinner-ordinary cares of life,' as poor Mrs Hemans called them. Dinner at Hohenbraten is literally *Mittagsessen* (mid-day eating), for that important epoch of the day occurs for every one between the hours of twelve and two. Dining at any later time is regarded as quite a dissipated and ultra-fashionable proceeding. All the public places and schools, with many of the shops, are closed during these two hours; and, in short, appetite or no appetite, you soon come to feel that when in Hohenbraten, you must do as Hohenbraten does. People talk metaphorically of oiling or greasing the wheels of life, in order to make them revolve smoothly; I am sure, if a similar process could have made prandial things pleasant, for us it was by no means wanting. 'Spare the grease-pot, and spoil the dinner,' is the fundamental maxim of a German cook. Hannibal is said to have softened real rocks with real vinegar. Rocks I can believe in; but if we were told that he had by a similar process subdued Hohenbraten beef to melting tenderness, I should take leave to doubt the assertion. His gigantic cruet—and it must have been a huge one—would, I'll be bound to say, have utterly failed to produce any impression on the mass of tough fibre called, by Hohenbraten courtesy, beef. But to return from Carthage to a German kitchen, from Hannibal to Regina Vollmer. I had had such woeful dyspeptic experience of my former cooks' dinners, that I thought, with the new *artiste*, I would try a tentative course of tactics.

'What have you been most in the habit of cooking?' I inquired.

'I don't know what the gnädige Frau likes to eat,' was the evasive reply.

'Well,' I said, 'just tell me what sort of dinners you were in the habit of sending up to the graf and his family.'

'Oh, they lived well, very well indeed; first, there was always *Suppe* and *Ochsenfleisch*, with *Beilagen* and *Gemüse*.'

Now, I knew well enough the meaning of these delicious viands. For a family of six or eight, a pound or so of tough coarse beef is well boiled in an ocean of water, which, with the addition of a little farinaceous matter or chopped fennel, forms the Suppe. The scrap of beef, then, with—as an Irish cook would say—'the soul and body boiled out of it,' is served up with radishes, tongue-grass, bits of gristle chopped fine, white of egg, mustard, and currant-jam; all which delicate condiments I have seen consumed to the last bit, although the whole formed a *plat* which no British cat, who had a proper sense of feline dignity, would touch with her whisker.

'Well,' I said, 'and what else?'

'Generally, a plate of *Wurst* [sausage]; sometimes, but not often, a small bit of *Braten* [roast-meat], and an *Auflauf* [a sort of thick coarse pancake].' And so ended the dinner of a Hohenbraten nobleman.

I tried to superinduce some improvements on the aristocratic bill of fare, but, I am bound to acknowledge, with very indifferent success. I took care that on our table there should be no stint of Braten, such as it was; and I succeeded in obtaining some excellent mealy potatoes. But to my surprise, my Regina, queenly in her scorn of British cookery, was very ill pleased.

'Dry potatoes,' she said, 'no Christian could eat; they should be allowed to grow cold, and then dressed in plenty of oil and vinegar, when they would be delicious. For this purpose,' she added, 'wet potatoes are much better than mealy ones, for they require less oil.'

In short, I had to make a compromise; to allow my Köchin to feed after her own fashion, and to try to induce her in return to aid and abet me in my fantastic cookery. I remember civilly requesting one of her predecessors to boil some carrots and turnips simply in water, instead of stewing them in grease. 'No,' she replied, very decidedly; 'she had always been accustomed to cook for Christians, not for cows and horses; and it was only animals of that description that would eat vegetables boiled in water.'

I have a good deal more to say of German cookery, especially as regards the great sausage-question; but I feel too much unfeigned respect for the mighty and unctuous Wurst to introduce an essay upon it at the end of an article; besides, certain sounds from the culinary regions warn me that I must wipe my pen and go hold an argument with Regina on the subject of an hour's cooking over a furious fire being too much for a thin beef-steak. Nevertheless, something must be said of the Sausage.

Bacon, in the sense in which we understand it, is a viand unknown to the South Germans. They eat pork either fresh or slightly salted, with sauer kraut and a sort of fragmentary pancake; and for the lard and fat, their unctuous cuisine finds abundant employment. Now, it is a general rule that English people, when at home, grumble *at* their country, and when abroad, grumble *for* it, and regret its various comforts and advantages. Amongst the sentimental causes of the home-sickness prevalent amongst the British sojourners in Hohenbraten, may be ranked as most prominent a matutinal longing for toasted bacon; and at length we found a remedy. A pork-butcher, named Herr Aichele, had lived for some years in England, and had there acquired the art of curing bacon; he was also versed in the English language, but after a certain remarkable and eccentric fashion; for example, instead of the generic word 'bacon,' he always chose to employ, in an adjective sense, a specific term scarcely to be named to ears polite; however, as his written bills ran thus, 'To so many pounds *belle* pork,' we ladies agreed to take the word in the French sense, and ignoring its English signification, to 'render the lard' as 'beautiful pork.'

It happened lately that I bespoke two hams from Herr Aichele, and requested him to let me know when they were ready; so one morning I received, written in pencil on a tiny discoloured scrap of paper, the following missive: 'i got two werre nice Leg of Pork for you kome daun this afternoon if you pleesse.—L. AICHELE.' Soon afterwards came a second epistle, which I copy verbatim: 'Miss my Chaps hongs theme Legs in the yard and the Kate kame on it, the dit hong theme to low, the are quite sboilet, i most presendle two another one.—L. AICHELE.' So I await in anxious literary and gastronomical expectation a third epistle from my porcine friend.

A favourite delicacy amongst the South Germans is a *Zwiebel Kuchen*, which, in virtue of my Irish birth, I may be perhaps permitted to describe as a fruit-tart made of boiled onions! A coarse, greasy, odorous dainty it is, and therefore highly relished by the gross-feeding Schwabs. How is it, in the name of Parnassus, that poetry contrives to flourish amongst them? Their dreadful habit of promiscuous expectoration, in which 'I expect they flog America' would, one might suppose, be sufficient to send not only the Graces but the Muses flying from the land. Yet, not to speak of modern and living examples, Schiller was a Schwab, as indeed I have good reason to know; for, during the last month, he and all his belongings, both mundane and ethereal, were dinned into our ears, and paraded before our eyes, until the very name of Schiller became a word of fear. Even the palate was appealed to, cookery made subservient to poetry. Schiller wine, Schiller soup, Schiller bread, and Schiller sausages were consumed; Schiller tobacco was smoked out of Schiller pipes; Schiller garments of all kinds were worn; and even the chimney-sweeps carried a Schiller ladder, and swept your stove-flues with a Schiller brush. In fact, I came at length to the conclusion, that every line the great master had written clearly resolved itself into a 'Song of the Bell'—a sort of German Great Tom or Big Ben, dinning our luckless British ears until they well-nigh cracked. The South Germans have a characteristic saying, when they want to express intense liking for anything, no matter whether it be an object of sense or of soul —'O das ist mir Wurst!' (Oh, it is sausage to me.) Sometimes the application is sufficiently absurd, as when an enthusiastic young Schwab was asked lately: 'Do you love Schiller's poetry?' 'O freilich,' was the energetic answer, 'it is sausage to me!'

MEDIEVAL LIFE IN LONDON.

The history of medieval England is yet unwritten. The chroniclers of the chivalric age were too much occupied with the conflicts for supremacy between the regal, baronial, and ecclesiastical powers of the realm, too intent upon recounting the doughty deeds of valorous knights, to bestow much attention upon what to us moderns is of at least equal interest —the condition of the people. If we seek for information as to the social life of our forefathers in the days of Cressy and Poitiers, we must dig it from the seemingly arid soil of ancient statutes, rolls, charters, registers, and doomsday-books.

In these hitherto neglected but invaluable records, the archives of Guildhall are peculiarly rich, and, thanks to the Master of the Rolls, the first step has been taken towards making their contents available, by the publication of the *Liber Albus*. The White Book is a compilation of civic enactments, ordinances, and regulations made in 1419, under the direction of the then Common Clerk, Master John Carpenter, a citizen of note, one of Whittington's executors, member of parliament for the city, and the founder of the City of London School. This compilation is written in Latin and Anglo-French, and extends from the reign of Edward I. to that of Richard II.; a period of more than a century, but during which so little change took place in national usages, that the records of the First Edward apply equally to the days of the Third. There is scarcely a phase of the national life on which the pages of the White Book do not throw light, and from them we may draw a pretty correct idea of life in London under the early Plantagenets.

The metropolis stood at that time in much closer relation to the court than at the present day. The king and the corporation were in constant communication. The chief magistrate of the city held a position equivalent to that still awarded him by trans-channel dramatists. We find it recorded that bad language in the mayor's presence, and cursing his lordship in his absence, were punished with imprisonment; while the pillory was the reward of one 'for telling lies about William Walworthe.' This same Walworthe was not a man to be trifled with. The king being out of town during his mayoralty, he took upon himself to behead two men for contumacious conduct, for which boldness his majesty Richard II. sent him his royal thanks, a circumstance probably remembered by the ready magistrate at a certain monster meeting in Smithfield. The citizens possessed several privileges; among others, immunity from having the royal household billeted upon them. In Edward II.'s reign, that monarch's secretary, with his sergeants, men, and horses, took possession of the house of the sheriff, John de Caustone. The latter incontinently turned out all the king's horses and all the king's men. It was afterwards enacted that killing one of the royal household who attempted to take forcible possession of a citizen's domicile, was no murder, provided the killer and six of his kinsmen took oath that it was upon that account only he had been slain. Determined as the civic authorities might shew themselves in defending their rights, they were none the less arbitrary in their rule over their fellow-citizens. In those good old times, the life of a freeman of London was a perpetual dancing in fetters.

The houses of ancient London were built entirely of wood, thatched with straw, stubble, or reeds—a formation sufficient to account for the non-existence of insurance offices. In the reign of Richard I., Fitzalwyne, the first mayor of London, issued a code of regulations for the building of houses, which code continued in force during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Under 'Fitzalwyne's Assize,' houses were built with party-walls of freestone, sixteen feet high, and three feet thick. From the top of the party-wall, the wooden framework of the roof ran up to a point, the gable being towards the street, plastered, and sometimes whitewashed; the roof was of tile, lead, or stone, from which gutters were laid along the wall, to carry off the rain into the street-kennels. The upper room was called the 'solar;' the joists supporting its floor being inserted at the height of eight feet from the ground. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, houses of two and three stories were built, each story often being a distinct freehold, a system productive of endless disputes and litigation. The shops were merely open rooms on the ground-floor, with large windows; stalls used for the sale of goods were limited to two and a half feet in depth; but pent-houses, or stalls on a larger scale, were made nine feet high, to allow horsemen to pass under them: these, if once fastened to the framework of the house, either by iron nails or wooden pegs, became part and parcel of the freehold. Chimneys came into general use about 1300, before which the smoke escaped as best it could. Oven or furnace flues, if placed near lath-work, boards, or wooden partitions, were removed by the scavenger at the expense of the offender. The law of landlord and tenant was simple: tenants-at-will, whose annual rent was under forty shillings, had to give a quarter's notice; above that amount, six months, or pay the rent for that term, or find a tenant; the landlord was bound to give the same notice, but if he sold the house, the purchaser could eject the tenant at his pleasure. On a tenant's goods being seized by his creditors, the landlord claimed priority, but only for two years' rent, his oath being held sufficient proof of the debt. The landlord of a baker was not allowed to share in the profits of his tenant's trade, or to supply him with corn. As a precaution against fire, the occupiers of large houses were expected to keep two ladders for the use of their neighbours, and, in summer, a vessel of water in front of the house. The substitutes for our modern fire-brigade and its paraphernalia consisted of two chains, two strong cords, and a strong iron crook with a wooden handle, wherewith to pull down the fragile tenements of our ancestors, who were called to the scene of destruction by the 'loudly sounding horn' of the ward-beadle.

Every householder was bound to pave the footpath before his own door, at the same level as his neighbours. The middle of the street was kept in repair by a tax called pavage, levied on horses and vehicles.

(A laden horse paid ¼d. on entering or leaving the city; a cart, 1d.; carts bringing sand and potters-clay, 3d. per week; carts from Stratford, laden with corn or flour, the same; if with firewood or charcoal on sale, 1d.; but vehicles and horses bearing victuals or goods for the consumption of the owners passed free.) For the better preservation of the roadway, carts serving the citizens with firewood, sand, or stone were forbidden to be shod with iron, or to stand anywhere but at Cornhill; and when unladen, were to be driven slowly through the streets. Cartage was exacted from the owners of carts and horses let out on hire by the sergeants of the city, but they were specially charged not to molest those of poor people bringing wares for sale.

In the reign of Edward I., citizens were permitted to keep pigs 'within their houses,' but the sties might not encroach upon the street; and any unfortunate straggling porker was killed by the first person so disposed, who either kept the carcass, or returned it to its owner for a fixed sum of money. The pigs who rejoiced in being the property of the renter of St Antony's Hospital (St Antony was the patron saint of the porcine race), were permitted to roam at their own sweet will; but, to keep the privilege within due bounds, the renter was obliged to take an oath not to claim *any* swine found at large, nor to hang bells around any pigs but such as had been given in alms. Afterwards, bakers only were permitted to keep pigs; and a little later, it was enacted that 'swine, cows, and oxen shall on no account be reared in houses within the city.'

'Genteel dogs'—that is, dogs belonging to the nobles—were allowed the freedom of the city; but less-favoured members of the canine family were forbidden to wander about by night or day without some one to take care of them, and be responsible for their misdeeds.

Arms were generally worn in the streets during the day; but, except in the case of 'great lords or men of substance, and such of their household as go before them with lights,' no person was to carry weapons after curfew (eight o'clock), or to be out without a light; while those who could not give a satisfactory account of themselves, were expected to stay indoors altogether. Barriers and chains were placed across the streets, especially those towards the Fleet River, and the alderman and his men kept watch and ward on horseback, while the gates were guarded by the sergeants-at-arms and their 'waytes.'

Our forefathers were not insensible to the necessity of sanitary precautions. Each ward provided four men, resident therein, to preserve, lower, and raise the pavements, and to remove all nuisances and filth at the cost of their authors, who were likewise fined 4d., or their goods taken in default. Kennels were made on each side of the streets. The householder was obliged to clear away all dirt from before his own house, taking care not to transfer it to his neighbours. The rakyers cleared the highway of hay, straw, rubbish, and refuse. Nothing was allowed to be thrown out of window; tailors and skinners were forced to scour their skins at night, and barbers and fishmongers were forbidden to throw their blood (barbers were surgeons then) and dirty water into the kennel, and ordered to take it privily to the river. It must not be supposed, however, that the silver Thames was then made the receptacle of nastiness, as it is in our more enlightened days. The citizens of old London took more pride in their river. With the above exceptions, no rubbish, sand, filth, or refuse was suffered to be thrown into the Thames or its tributaries—the Fleet River and Walbrook. All boats taking in hay, straw, or rushes were to start immediately they were laden, and to pay 12d. for cleansing the place where their cargo was unloaded. Places were provided for burying butchers' offal, and the practice of carrying it to the Thames forbidden; and it was death to bathe in the river near the Tower. The householders dwelling on the banks of the Walbrook had to provide themselves with rakes, to intercept any unclean thing thrown into it. Water was conveyed from the Thames in carts, the charge being fixed as follows: From Dowgate or Castle Baynard to Cheap, 1½d.; beyond that distance, 2d.; but the main supply was derived from the City Conduit at the east end of Cheap, the water of which brewers and maltsters were not allowed to use.

Ships and boats could only be moored at night on the city side of the river. All boats going to Gravesend, loaded at St Botolph's Wharf, near the Tower, where all bringing 'small victuals' from the eastward discharged their load; here, too, passengers might land with a wallet, fardel, male, or panyer, carried under the arm, without paying wharfage. The charge for a boat from Billingsgate to Gravesend was fixed at 2d., and by an enactment of later date, no waterman was to charge more than 3d. for his whole boat between London and Westminster. London Bridge was provided with a drawbridge, for raising which pontage was exacted from vessels passing with merchandise.

The punishments awarded to criminals consisted of death, pillory, imprisonment, and fine. Of these, the pillory was most used. We find it adjudged for the following offences: For pretending to be one of the sheriff's sergeants, and arresting the bakers of Stratford, to extract a fine from them; for pretending to be a king's officer; for pretending to be a physician; for pretending to be the summoner of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and so summoning the Prioress of Clerkenwell; for cutting off pouches; for cutting off a sword; for stealing a child to go begging; for playing with false dice; for begging under false pretences; for practising soothsaying for the discovery of stolen property; for practising magic; for bribing an approver to bring a charge against a certain brewer; for stealing a leg of mutton; for pretending to be a holy hermit; for begging in behalf of the Hospital of Bethlehem; for using unstamped measures; for forging letters, bonds, and deeds; for counterfeiting the seals of the pope and certain nobles. Persons denounced at the Wardmote for leading a notoriously bad life were committed to prison; and women of bad character, after being pilloried for a first offence, if found guilty a third time, were turned out of the city altogether. Drawing a sword, dagger, or knife, was punished by a fine of half a mark, or fifteen days in Newgate; but if blood was drawn, a fine of 20s., or forty days. Striking with the fist, without drawing blood, was liable to 2s., or eight days; with blood, 40 pence, or twelve days—the offender also paying damages to the injured individual, and finding sureties for future good behaviour. Such cases were tried day by day before the sheriffs. Any felon who avoided the law by taking sanctuary, was to be watched till he surrendered, or abjured the realm; should he escape, the ward was fined 100s. Prisoners were confined in Newgate, Ludgate, the Tun, and the two Compters—the last four were used for debtors and the more trivial offenders; those convicted of anything short of felony, by paying, as their means allowed, 4d., 6d., 8d., or 12d. per week to the sheriffs, being allowed to remove from Newgate, either bringing their bed with them thence, or paying the prison-porter one penny per night for the use of one, 'as is the manner in all lodging-houses.' From that official they could also obtain bread, ale, wood, and charcoal, at reasonable price and just measure.

Singularly enough, among this century of enactments and records, we find no allusion whatever to drunkenness or to burial usages. Whether it was impossible to be guilty of the former on the ale of mediæval brewers, or whether it was so common as not to constitute an offence, is an open question. The omission of the latter is yet more curious, as our ancestors certainly died, and somebody as certainly must have buried them; but if the *Liber Albus* be silent on the matter of death, it is eloquent on matters appertaining to preserving life, and replete with regulations respecting eating, drinking, and comforting the inner man.

If an Englishman wishes to appraise the merits and demerits of the so-called 'paternal' system of government, he cannot do better than study the civic records of the fourteenth century. Protection in its widest sense was adopted by the authorities, and the word 'competition' must have been unknown to the language. Little scope was left for any display of ability in the art of trading, the trader's course being marked out for him from beginning to end. What he should sell, when he should sell, how he should sell, where he should sell, and to whom he should sell, were all settled for him by proclamation, enactment, and assize. A man was not only told at what price he must part with his goods, but if he withdrew from the trade because the profits would not support him, he was excluded from ever returning to it, and deprived of the freedom of the city! The only excuse for these tyrannous regulations is, that they originated in an earnest desire to protect the purchaser from being cheated in quantity, quality, or price; that they did not succeed in so doing, is evident from the many ordinances issued regarding the same commodity.

Bread, as was natural, was the subject of more than ordinary care; that made without the city, at Stratford, Bromley, Stepney, and St Albans, was considered inferior to the city bread, and at times was prohibited altogether—a fate that often awaited the loaves of Southwark, because 'the bakers of Southwark are not amenable to the justice of the city.' There seems to have been three sorts of bread in use—tourte, or brown bread, made of unbolted meal; wastel, French, or puffe, answering to our 'seconds;' and demeine, or lord's bread, being the best white bread, and double the price of wastel. The baker of white was not allowed to sell brown bread; and the baker of the latter was forbidden to have a bolter in his possession, to sell to a retailer, or supply any one with flour. Loaves were made in sizes to sell at two or four for a penny; they were sold in the public markets, and also by female retailers or regratresses, who carried them from door to door, their profit consisting of the thirteenth loaf of the 'baker's dozen.' Substantial people had a right to send their servants to see the dough kneaded, and every loaf was impressed with the baker's seal, a counterpart of which was in the hands of the alderman of the ward. From time to time, the officers of the city visited the ovens to test the weight and quality of the bread while hot, and punish the maker if his batch was inferior to the assize. Bakers were forbidden to heat their ovens with fern, straw, reeds, or stubble; to use fountain-water for kneading; to buy corn for re-sale; to give credit to a regratress in debt elsewhere; to entice away the servants of their neighbours, or employ those of the trade who left their places without a licence; to carry bludgeons, or to take a business, unless provided with sureties, and possessed of chattels worth forty shillings. If found guilty of selling bread below the standard, the offending baker had the offending loaf hung round his neck, and was drawn on a hurdle through the most frequented and dirtiest streets; on a repetition of his crime, he was drawn through Cheap, and pilloried for an hour; and a third offence was punished in addition by the destruction of his oven, and his being prohibited from carrying on the trade again. Corn-dealers and millers were not forgotten. The former were not allowed to sell by sample, or to mix good and bad grain together, on pain of forfeiture; the latter were remunerated by a halfpenny in meal and threepence in money for grinding a quarter of corn, the grain being duly weighed before delivery to the miller. In Richard II.'s reign, it was ordered that every house using two bushels a week should grind for themselves. When a miller was detected pilfering from the grist, the mill-horse was impounded till the proprietor handed over the offender for punishment, and made amends to the defrauded customer, until which time all persons were forbidden to send grain to that mill.

The great markets for meat were held at St Nicholas Shambles, near Newgate, and at Stocks Market (the site of the Mansion House); they were closed at dark. Butchers were not permitted to sell suet, tallow, or lard, to be taken beyond the sea. The poulterers dealt in poultry, game, rabbits, and eggs; those free of the city stood at the west side of St Michael's, Cornhill; those who entered London by Newgate and Aldersgate, located themselves by the butchers' stalls in St Nicholas Shambles; and the foreigners sold their stock at the corner of Leadenhall. No forestalling was allowed, and the seller of unsound poultry was pilloried, and the condemned bird or birds burned under his nose. By a proclamation of Edward I., it was ordered that 'no poulterer, fishmonger, or regrater shall buy any kind of victuals for re-sale, until prime (6 A.M.) has been rung out at St Paul's, so that the buyers for the king and great lords of the land and the good people of the city may make good their purchases so far as they shall need.'

Fish appear to have been in great demand among the middle and poorer classes; we find the following descriptions mentioned: Bass, barbel, cod, conger, cockles, dory, dabs, dace, eels, flounders, herring, haddock, lamprey, muscles, mackerel, oysters, pike, porpoise, ray, roach, sturgeon, sole, surmullet, salmon, sealing, sprats, shad, smelts, stickelings, scaloysters, stockfish, turbot, and whelks. Lobsters, crabs, and shrimps seem to have been unknown to the Londoners. Salmon, cod, herring, haddock, mackerel, conger, and ling were brought to market salted as well as fresh. The retail fishmarkets were in Bridge Street, Old Fish Street, and West Cheap; then existed fish-shops in Queen Hythe, which, with London Bridge and Billingsgate, was a principal landing-place for fish. The number of enactments respecting this important trade is extraordinarily great. No fish was to be bought till the vessel was moored; citizens had the privilege of purchasing at the same rate as the dealers, but apprentices were not allowed to enter a vessel for that purpose. No one might retail fish on the quay, or carry cooked whelks for sale at all. Sprats and whelks were sold by the tandel or half tandel (a measure which baffles identification); sturgeon by the barrel, all in one barrel being of one taking and curing. Porpoise was sold from the boat, whole or in slices, the Bridge bailiff first receiving his fee in the shape of the fins, tail, and entrails. Lampreys of Nantes, when bought for retailing, were to be sold within four days after landing, in Old Fish Street, after which period they were not to be sold in less quantities than dozens or half-dozens. Muscles, whelks, and cockles, probably because they were a favourite food with the poor, could not be bought for re-sale. Retailers were also forbidden to purchase herrings, mackerel, or other fish brought into town by cart, till noon. When fish were sold by the basket, the latter must be capable of holding one bushel of oats, while the fish must be of one sort only, and of one quality, so that the legal luminaries of the period escaped the difficulty of deciding as to the right of crabs to be included among 'mixed fish.'

The consumption of so much fish doubtless contributed towards making our ancestors a thirsty race; a multitude of brewers satisfied that thirst, although the trade was one of little repute, and carried on principally by females. As soon as a brewing was completed, the ale was tasted by the ale-conner of the ward, who, if he found it inferior to the assize, ordered it to be sold at a lower price, disobedience to which was visited with fine, imprisonment, and pillory. Ancient ale was drunk quite new, and if we may judge from the quart being the smallest measure ever alluded to, could scarcely have been of a very intoxicating nature. Customers used to send their vessels to the brewery, where they stood all night, to allow the ale time to work, so as to be by the morning 'good and clear.' Tavern-keepers and victuallers—the latter sold provisions only—did not receive any guests as lodgers: those who did so were called hostelers, from whence probably comes 'mine host;' they, in their turn, were restricted to serving their visitors, and could not bake or brew for themselves, or keep a guest longer than a day and a night, unless they made themselves responsible for any offence he might commit. The hostelers, with few exceptions, were freemen, strangers and foreigners being jealously excluded from the trade. Dealers in sweet wines were forbidden to sell any other description; and dealers in the unsweet wines were ordered not to keep Gascon, Rochelle, or Spanish wine in the same cellar with Rhenish. Before it could be sold, the wine was officially scrutinised, gauged, and assessed; unsound and sound, new and old, were not allowed to be mixed together, and the taverner was compelled to dispose of his old wine before he sold any of his new. There is no mention of flasks or bottles, so we must infer that wines were always sold on draught. To guard against adulteration, or substitution of an inferior liquor, every customer had a right to see that the measure was clean, and to be present at the drawing of the wine from the cask. All taverns and breweries closed at curfew, in default of which the taverner had to give up his silver drinking-mug, as a pledge of future good-behaviour, in addition to paying a fine to the city.

Even at this early period, England carried on an extensive trade with other countries, although the imports unduly preponderated. The exports were limited to corn, wood, hides, butter—a thin, serous butter, sold by liquid measure; but France, Greece, and Italy sent their wines; Spain, her wine, wool, and squirrel-skins; Brabant and Flanders, their rayed cloths; Limoges furnished its textures, Rheims its fabrics, and Prussia her stockfish. The Hanse merchants, and those of Amiens, Corby, Nesle, and Cologne, enjoyed many privileges, and were exempt from many of the annoyances systematically visited upon foreign traders by the illiberal spirit of the age. Thus foreigners were prohibited keeping hostels, selling by retail, acting as brokers, buying dyed cloth when wet, making dye, or 'doing any work that belonged to a citizen.' Alien poulterers must not sell privately, or warehouse their stock, or lodge under the roof of a freeman. Foreign butchers were forbidden to carry any carcass to market without the hide, and ordered to sell their meat by retail until noon, by wholesale from that time to vespers, when they were obliged to get rid of their remaining stock at any price, being forbidden to carry any away for salting or storing. Forty days' stay was the utmost allowed to foreign visitors to London. Such was the extraordinary jealousy displayed by the citizens towards strangers, that the only charitable construction we can put upon it is, that they believed their city possessed such attractions that unless they rendered it as disagreeable as possible to them, they would be overwhelmed and outnumbered by continental rivals. Indeed, Andrew Borde, some hundred and fifty years later, when the laws regarding strangers were less stringent, urges the great number of resident foreigners as a decisive proof of the superiority of London over all European capitals.

We might prolong this paper almost indefinitely, so full is the *Liber Albus* of interesting and suggestive matter; but we have done sufficient to shew its importance as a help to the study of our country's history, and point out a rich mine of wealth to those interested in medieval antiquities; and in conclusion, must express our hope that this volume, so excellently edited by Mr Riley, may be but the precursor of the publication of the other treasures of the Guildhall Library.

CAST ADRIFT.

I HAD risen early and lain down late in the vain effort to better myself in the old country; the very struggle for life was a hard one; so at length I resolved to follow the universal law, which, like the instinct of the bees, bids the young go forth to seek new settlements, and going round half the globe, endeavour either among the gold regions of Australia, or its luxuriant corn-fields, to win competence and a home, not only for myself, but for my mother and her orphan niece, whom I hoped some day to make my wife.

The parting with those dear ones over, I embarked in a small trader, investing my surplus funds in the purchase of such goods as were likely to realise double their value at my destination. The first half of our voyage progressed favourably, but off Cape L'Agulhas we encountered a severe gale, and lost our fore-yard, which necessitated our putting into Algoa Bay to replace it. It was night when we arrived, and we were all anxiety for morning, that we might see the southern land of whose beauty we had heard so much. At sunrise the announcement that a school of whales was in the bay, still further hastened our movements, for neither my fellow-passenger nor I had ever seen one. In a few minutes more we were on deck, looking eagerly at the shoal of huge, black creatures, which, like a group of moving rocks, were tossing and gamboling uncouthly as they took their leisurely yet rapid way along the bay.

From a fishery near the entrance, a whole flotilla of light, graceful whale-boats were already skimming along like sea-birds in pursuit of them; and the progress of both fish and boats was such as to make it evident that our view of the chase would be but a telescopic one. This was a great disappointment, and one that we in vain endeavoured to remedy by climbing the rigging. At this juncture my fellow-passenger remembered that one of the ship's boats was built for whaling; so we borrowed it from the captain, every sailor on board volunteering to accompany us, though we could only take four—one of them being chosen because he had been in a whaler; then jumping into the boat, we hurried off to the scene of action.

A few minutes brought us within view, and it was interesting to watch the movements of the tiny boats, as adroitly, yet cautiously, they closed around the enormous fish—for only one whale now remained, all his companions having prudently dived into deep water, and slipped out to sea—which rolled and sported in the transparent water, every now and then spouting aloft arching jets of foam, which flashed and sparkled in the sunshine like wreaths of jewels, or beating the water with his tail, until the sound echoed along the shore; apparently unconscious of the uplifted arm of the harpooner in the prow of each advancing boat, or of the keen weapon he held aloft, ready to strike: unless, indeed, his knowledge might be inferred from the regularity wherewith, with practical humour, he was sure to sink beneath the surface at the critical moment, leaving his baffled assailants to forget their disappointment in watching for his next appearance, when the same course of manœuvres was repeated.

So often did this happen, that we had become almost as excited and anxious as the fishers themselves, and as fearful the sport would prove a failure, when, after a fifth or sixth disappearance, the whale unexpectedly rose in our immediate neighbourhood, announcing his arrival by a grunting 'blow.'

'If we had had but a harpoon, we might have got him ourselves,' exclaimed the other passenger in a flush of excitement.

'We have, sir—we have!' cried the whaler eagerly. 'Before we came away, I put a coil of rope and the ship's harpoon in the boat, in case of accidents; and if you will row away after him, I'll bend on the rope in a minute.'

This wild proposal was received with a general shout of applause, and while the sailor prepared the harpoon, we dashed after the whale with a speed in which eagerness supplied the place of skill. By the time all was ready, we were close upon him; then poising the harpoon high above his head, the whaler —for the first time in his life, as he afterwards confessed—struck it vigorously into the side of the floating monster, who received the blow with a plunge that half filled the boat with water.

The next moment, he was diving down into the depths of the bay, where it appeared likely we should soon follow him, for our unskilled harpooner seemed scarce able to pay-out the rope with the rapidity equalling the descent of our unruly captive.

But a few minutes more saw him on the surface again, and in a paroxysm of rage, dashing on at a furious rate, and dragging us along in his rear with a velocity that almost buried our slight boat in the water, and sent the parted waves leaping from her bows in hissing surges high above our heads; while, through the opening in the watery curtain, our rapid progress gave us fleeting glimpses of land, and sea, and boats, all blent in bewildering confusion.

As our little bark was thus hurried along, a wild exultation took possession of us, which, in the men, rose to the pitch of cheers, loud and hearty enough to have scared any steed less headstrong than our paddled one. It was impossible to doubt we were in momentary peril, for none of our crew possessed the requisite skill with the oar-rudder to follow the rapid evolutions, the divings and unexpected returnings to the surface, of the monster; and far less did they understand that most essential point in whaling—the proper management of the harpoon rope.

For more than an hour we continued to sweep along with undiminished speed, for the strength of the whale appeared inexhaustible, however it might be with his patience, for of late he had indulged in several plunges, which had shaken our little craft to its centre, and more than once he uttered bellowing roars, which echoed far and wide.

After one of these deep-mouthed cries, he suddenly paused, then turning round, came rushing back upon us with distended jaws, as if his fury had resolved to crush our fragile boat at once. The sight of the approaching monster, and his black cavernous mouth, was anything but pleasant even to our enthusiasm. The men cried aloud, and waved their arms, to deter him, but he did not appear to hear them; then they seized the oars, resolved to give him battle, but he passed beyond their reach, his great size contrasting awfully with our small proportions; then just as he had gone by, he raised his enormous tail nearly twenty feet into the air, and with one powerful blow struck our boat, dashing it in pieces, and leaving us struggling in the water, all save the poor whaler, who having become entangled in the harpoon rope, was borne off by the victorious animal. A few minutes after, another boat having struck and killed the fish, the poor fellow was rescued, but insensible, and so nearly drowned that he was with difficulty restored to life. Meanwhile, other boats clustered round, picked us up, and took us back to our ship.

Occupied by our whale-chase, and afterwards in the resuscitation of our unfortunate comrade, we had not noticed that the calm of the morning had given place to a strong south-east breeze, which was raising the broad expanse of the bay into large crested waves, that, rolling onward to the beach, broke on it in thundering surges, and as at that time the bay boasted no jetty, stopping all communication with the shore. Never, during all our voyage, did our vessel pitch as she did that day, for the bay, fifteen miles from point to point, lay open to the winds, and to the full sweep of the South Atlantic Ocean, whose billows rising with the increasing wind each hour into loftier swells, broke angrily against the bows of the labouring vessel, and then, with a sullen surge, swept on. Fortunately for themselves, the fishers had anchored their whale, and after leaving us at our ship, hastened to the land, which they gained with difficulty.

The cloudless blue of the tropical sky was overhead, and the brilliant southern sun shone down gloriously upon the scene, lighting up the clear blue waves, and adding to the dazzling whiteness of their surging summits, and to the radiance of the gem-like spray, which bounded high into the air above them. But it shed no brightness on the solitary little bark, which, with doubled anchors and lowered masts, struggled so hardly for life amid that waste of raging water; for, with the passing day, yet wilder and fiercer waxed the storm, and louder roared the foaming waves among which we tossed so fearfully, sometimes cast aloft on the ridges of lofty billows, until we thought our cables must part with the sudden strain; at others, almost buried in the depths of seething abysses, whence it seemed unlikely we should ever rise again; while every now and then, some enormous wave would strike full against us with frightful violence, and breaking over our bows, roll along the deck, with force that threatened to bear all before it, the which we only escaped by clinging to the ropes and rigging.

The sun at length set, and darkness began to close over us, doubling the horrors of the still increasing tempest. Suddenly, a wild cry from the bow rose above the howling of the storm, and looking ahead, we perceived a huge mountain of water rolling rapidly along the bay, its lofty crest and seething sides gleaming with phosphoric light, as rising each instant higher, it towered above our masts, ready to overwhelm and sink our frail ship at her anchors. We were in imminent peril, and one that no human effort could evade or lessen; the only thing left us was submission, and bowing to our fate, we quietly awaited it. The fatal moment had apparently come, for the huge wave was hovering over our devoted vessel, when she unexpectedly rose on the crest of a smaller one, presenting her bows to the enormous billow, which struck against her with a violence that threatened to shatter her. The water and spray fell over her in a blinding deluge, the unfortunate vessel moaned and trembled as if her hour were come, and there was a terrible, though momentary struggle. The next, the wave passed on, leaving us afloat; but both our cables had parted with the shock, and we found we were being swept back from the anchorage towards the long line of surf-bound coast under our lee. Ere we had reached more than half-way to the shore, a whole line of beacon-fires blazed suddenly up, revealing the tremendous surf that broke along the beach. A short space more, and we reached its outer edge, and struck heavily upon the rocks, while the breakers roared and surged fiercely around us, as if eager to begin their work. But the next high wave swept us further on, to strike again and again, until, ere many minutes were over, the good ship that had borne us more than five thousand miles in safety, was cast on her broadside in the raging surf, whose waves, rising in high, roaring crests, broke over her in foaming cascades.

Fortunately, our vessel had fallen shoreward, otherwise, our fate must have been certain and instantaneous. But even as it was, what hope could we have of life, clinging to bolts and rings along our sloping deck, and with that fearful cataract sweeping over us, and those great surging waves rolling between us and safety? Meanwhile, high above our heads stretched the clear, dark-blue sky; and the brilliant constellations of the south shone calmly down upon the scene, as if to shew how far removed was heaven from earth.

It seemed doubly hard to perish so close to land, and with numbers of our fellow-creatures standing but a few fathoms from us. Suddenly, from among the crowd, a rocket shot up into the sky right over our vessel, and fell into the sea beyond; the next moment, the mate sprang forward to catch the line it had brought from the shore, and drawing inboard the strong rope attached to it, secured it to the rigging. And by this rope, half-buried in the surf, it was that, if at all, we must save our lives. It was a fearful venture, only suited to an extremity such as ours; and even then, with the sea breaking over us, and the unfortunate vessel grinding to pieces beneath our feet, there was a momentary hesitation ere any one would commit himself to so frail a bridge.

As I stood nearest, I proffered to lead the way, and in another minute was launched among the waves, clinging to the supporting rope. Never shall I forget the struggle that ensued—how the great breakers curled around me, surging angrily above my head; how furiously they dashed and beat against me, and, as though they had been instinct with demon-life, strove to tear me from my refuge, all the while muttering in my ears hoarse threats of sweeping me out to sea among the dark, inexorable billows raging for a victim. At length my feet touched land, and my heart bounded with joy even among the breakers; the next moment, an immense wave broke over me, tearing my rope from its fastenings, casting me helplessly down on the beach, and sweeping me back again in its retreat. Then came a rush and a whirl, and ringing noises in my ears, which are only heard by drowning men, and I knew nothing more. But brave men linked themselves hand to hand, and venturing deep into the surf, risked their own lives to save mine.

A hearty, generous cheer from the wreck greeted my landing, and never shall I forget its warmth. Then another rocket was thrown over the vessel, and the rope secured anew, and then, through much peril, the shipwrecked voyagers reached the shore—all save one, my late fellow-passenger, and he was swept from the rope, and tossed among the breakers, as I had been, but less fortunate than I, was swept out to sea, and never heard of more.

I was bruised, bewildered, and exhausted by my passage through the surf, and filled with deep grief for the lost man, who had been my almost inseparable companion during our twelve weeks' voyage; and, until I saw the ship breaking in pieces before my eyes, I scarce remembered that I stood alone and penniless upon a foreign shore—cast utterly adrift;
for with the loss of the ship, of course, my p
to Australia was lost; my little venture al
perished with her, and as I had not taken th
caution to insure it, I had no means left to p
my voyage. However, I was young, and, despi
past, still hopeful, and I entertained the general
that in a colony, none who were strong and willi
work, need want; but I found it widely othe
The country was in a state of extreme comm
depression, owing to a recent Caffre war, and n
humblest clerkship was to be obtained. Fro
same cause, no agriculturist wanted assistance
as the war was over, even 'food for powder' w
in request. I thought of a school, but found
abounded; I offered to teach French and Ge
but all either knew them already, or else di
wish to learn.

I was well-nigh starving, and in despair; an
after day of enforced idleness I paced the sand
increasing heaviness of heart, sometimes arrai
the Providence that had left me to want, and
off my fellow-passenger, whose prospects the
would not have injured; at others, regretting
had not perished also.

A subscription had been raised for the poor
wrecked mariners—none thought of the poor
wrecked passenger—and they had since enter
board other vessels, all but the whaler, and h
obtained employment at the fishery. By a s
impulse, I resolved to follow him there, and, t
astonishment, I was accepted, for they were sh
hands, and that morning's amateur whaling had
all concerned in their estimation. It was a st
employment for an educated man, and, stranger
for the first time in my life, I prospered.
boat in which I rowed was sure to be successfu
after a time, when I was able to take harpo
hand, it never failed to strike home, and send u
with flying colours to receive the winner's rewa

The close of the fishing-season left me with a
surplus, and until the commencement of the
employed myself in building, with my own
on a lot of land which I had purchased, a
to harbour my home-friends. It was, indeed, a
beginning, but it has proved a good one.
after year, I went on in the same course, u
became a partner in the fishery, and in pr
of time, the sole proprietor. Years have
since I have needed to cast a harpoon, save
way of amusement; and though the idea may
flattering to my vanity, I am constrained to
that I have found my true vocation.

TRADE IN DIAMONDS.

Known from very early times, the diamon
always retained for itself the principal place
jewels. Still in the east, a superstitious
attaches itself to this stone, about which innum
fables have, in various ages, been current. T
entals believe that certain diamonds shine in the
so as to be used by solitary students for lamps
at Bagdad they say, in the reign of Haro
Raschid, a youth was discovered in an oratory r
the Koran by the light of a diamond as large
hen's egg. With respect to size, the exaggera
not very great, since the stone found at Kolo
little short, before it was cut and polished,
dimensions attributed to the Bagdad stone b
imagination of the Arabs.

The trade in diamonds, though often highly
tive, did not form a separate branch of commer
a comparatively recent date, and even now is
entirely detached from the traffic in other gem

it demands so much skill, acuteness, and experience, that those only achieve great success who devote themselves exclusively to this department of trade. Its profitableness, however, depends much on fashion, on accidental variations in public taste, and on fluctuations in the supply, regulated by no law, and therefore not to be foreseen or guarded against. Where these glittering vanities will turn up, science is unable to determine. They are found in mountains and on plains, in ploughed fields and in marshes, in India, in Siberia, in Borneo, and in Brazil. Sometimes there is a scarcity of them, at other times a glut; but whether scarce or plentiful, there has never since their discovery been a period during which they have not constituted a favourite article of regal and imperial magnificence, and been thought to lend additional splendour to beauty itself.

Throughout the east, queens and princesses never consider themselves properly apparelled unless they have a blaze of diamonds about their waists, ornaments of the same gems flashing between the tresses of their raven hair, and descending in festoons upon their bosoms. Sultans and chiefs also aim at producing effect upon their subjects by decorating their persons after the same fashion, and studding the hilts and scabbards of their poniards and sabres with jewels. Here, in Europe, the same taste, a little modified, prevails. Men do not consider it effeminate or ridiculous to wear diamond-rings, while women are often vainer of these brilliants than of their own personal charms. The wife of an English ambassador appeared, not very long ago, at the French court with a million's worth of jewels on her dress, so that, as she moved beneath the vast chandeliers of the Tuileries, she looked like a personification of the mines of Golconda. Most persons will remember what marvels have been wrought by diamond-necklaces, and how the fate of thrones and the destinies of whole nations have been influenced by one woman's passion for these adornments. Once at Calcutta, a curious substitute for diamonds was used by a lady at the governor-general's ball. She caught a number of fireflies, and stitched them to her dress in diminutive bags of gauze. The effect was striking beyond conception. As she moved, the flies shot forth their light, so that the side of her dress which was turned from the chandelier seemed to be spotted with fire.

With the changing phases of civilisation, all kinds of jewels rise or fall in public esteem. The diamond seems to have exerted its greatest influence during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, when the belief in its mysterious properties was still rife throughout Christendom. Merchants then travelled over the whole east, exposing themselves to every kind of peril, and enduring hunger, thirst, and extreme fatigue, to collect these glittering spoils of the earth, by dealing in which they amassed princely fortunes, purchased immense estates, and founded powerful families. Accident occasionally came to the aid of their skill and intrepidity. Amid the ruins, for example, of Constantinople, a poor boy picked up a diamond which he sold to a janizary for fourpence; the soldier, in his turn, disposed of it to some one else for a few shillings; and thus the jewel proceeded from hand to hand, until, for a comparatively small sum, it became the property of a merchant, who obtained for it, from Sultan Mourad II., the sum of a hundred thousand crowns. So, again, in India, a poor peasant, turning up the soil with his plough, was struck by the peculiar glitter of a pebble lying among other stones. Stopping his oxen, he picked it up, and though he understood nothing of gems, immediately, with the quickness of an oriental, persuaded himself he had found a prize. Abandoning his plough, therefore, and wrapping up the pebble in a rag, he walked, barefoot, a distance of forty miles, to Golconda, where his good-fortune directed him to an honest merchant, who informed him he was in possession of the largest diamond in the world. What sum he obtained for it, is not stated; but it was sufficient to enrich both himself and his descendants. The history of this stone, if it could be given in full, would form a volume. Having been purchased by an ambitious chief, eager to barter his ornaments for political power, he presented it to the great descendant of Baber, Aurungzebe. From him it passed down, through various vicissitudes, to the last Sikh ruler of the Punjaub, and became, by victory, the property of the East India Company. However vast might be its value, they made a present of it to the Queen; and under the name of Kohihnoor, or Mountain of Light, it was beheld by millions of the English people, beneath a strong iron grating, at the Great Exhibition of 1851.

When a diamond-merchant travelled eastward from Europe, wherever he made known his destination, princes and grandees were sure to intrust him with fresh orders, particularly in Turkey and Persia. Before he reached India, therefore, his commissions were often so numerous that he had much difficulty, even in the mart of Golconda, to find gems sufficient to supply the demands of his customers. The great traveller, Tavernier, may be looked upon as a fair representative of the diamond-dealers of his age. Being a man of more than ordinary intelligence, who extended the sphere of his observations considerably beyond the limits of commerce, he was often consulted by the most powerful princes, whose understandings, however, were not always commensurate with their riches and authority. Of a conversation which he once had with a shah of Persia, he has left a minute and curious account; but as it did not turn on the diamond-trade, it would be beside our purpose to repeat it. When he made known his intention of visiting the Indian mines, most of those with whom he conversed sought to dissuade him from realising his design, by representing them as encircled by every kind of danger, malaria of the most deadly kind, forests infested by wild beasts, and tribes of men surpassing the worst of these in ferocity. But the traveller, confiding in his own experience, despised all their warnings. He had invariably found perils vast and threatening at a distance diminish as he approached, especially where he had to deal with men, who might generally be conciliated by fair words and the act of putting confidence in them.

The condition of the Deccan, it must be owned, was far better then than it has been since. At the present day, it would hardly be safe for a merchant with large bags of gold to travel from the coast of Malabar, through the gorges of the Western Ghauts, to Bejapore and Golconda, since he would be nearly certain to encounter predatory bands of Arabs, breaking away, perhaps, from the service of the Nizam, cr on the way to offer to His Highness the use of their swords. Thugs, Phansigurs, Dakoits, and other robbers, in spite of the police organised by the English, might likewise have something to say to his treasures and to his throat. But in those days of Mogul supremacy, when the sceptre of Delhi was stretched with more or less vigour over all India, the adventurous diamond-merchant landed at Surat, familiar to all readers of the *Arabian Nights*, and made his way without let or hindrance to Golconda. There, under the charge of an apothecary, he left a large portion of his wealth, and with the remainder proceeded to the mines.

Nearly all the old writers describe the scene of their operations in a vague and unsatisfactory manner, which imparts an air of romance to their accounts, but compels us to have recourse to more modern authorities when we would acquire precise information.

The diamond-mines of India are chiefly situated between the Kistnah and Pennar rivers, and many of them cluster about both banks of the latter stream. The gems are found in the alluvial soil, or in rocks of the most recent formation, in lands not greatly elevated above the level of the sea. Not far distant, however, are ranges of hills about a thousand feet in height, in one of which the Pennar rises, and after forcing its way through a gap in the other, flows through a channel alternately soft and rocky, through the district of Nellore. The search for diamonds still goes on as of old; the speculators farm from the government plots of ground, more or less extensive, which they enclose with a low fence, within which they carry on their operations. Large gems are rarely found, but when they do turn up, a third of their value is claimed by the government, which is therefore far more grasping and oppressive than in the seventeenth century, when it was satisfied with a duty of 2 per cent. from the seller and buyer. The enthusiasm which once animated this branch of industry has almost entirely died away. The work is carried on languidly both here and at Sumbhulpore on the Mahanuddy, where 60,000 men, women, and children were once beheld diffused like swarms of bees over the plain, digging, washing, sorting, or bearing bags of jewels in the matrix to the offices of the overseers. Smaller diamonds are discovered by their sparkle amid the gravel, which shews they are only fragments of larger stones broken by accident, because when entire they are wrapped in a crust, polished and shining indeed like pebbles on the seashore, but disclosing no other symptoms of the brilliance within.

Nothing like a philosophical history of precious stones has yet been written. We know nothing of the chemical process by which nature forms them, nothing of the materials of which they are composed, for all that has been discovered by experiment amounts to this, that the diamond may be destroyed by immense heat. Practically, it is observed that it acquires certain peculiarities from the nature of the soil in which it is found. When perfect, it exactly resembles so much pure water, congealed by nature's chemistry, and rendered harder than the hardest metal. When its interior is exposed, by polishing, to the light, the rays of the sun descend into its depths, and playing and wandering there, are reflected, refracted, and intermingled, so as to produce an almost supernatural blaze of splendour. From this unclouded brilliance, the diamond passes through a thousand intermediate changes to absolute black, when it presents the appearance of translucent ebony. Occasionally, when it has been steeped for thousands of years in a morass, it assumes the hues of the beryl or of the topaz, or even of a very pale sapphire. The last is least in esteem among the merchants, who detect its lurking blue by examining it under the thick foliage of a tree. In Europe, lapidaries study the water of the diamond in broad daylight; but the Hindoos, for this purpose, prefer the night. Placing a powerful lamp in a square opening in a wall, they stand before it, and hold up the diamond between the finger and thumb against the stream of light, which enables them to detect the minutest flaw in its interior.

When the trade was at its height, a merchant arriving from foreign countries was waited on by the governor, who explained the rules in conformity with which business was carried on in the place; he then, if the stranger consented, took all the money he had brought with him into his keeping, and bound himself to answer for its safety to the smallest fraction; but both Mohammedan and Hindoo dealers were so addicted to the practice of fraud, that the government found itself under the necessity of keeping the strictest possible watch upon them. A secret war, indeed, was always carried on between the rulers and the merchants—the former seeking to obtain their share of all profits made; the latter, to elude their demands. In Tavernier's case, four inferior officers were granted him, nominally as a guard of honour, but in fact as spies upon his proceedings, for, having never been accustomed to honesty, the worthy governor found himself under the necessity of suspecting and watching everybody. But Hindoo craft easily outgeneraled the heavy wits of the Moslems. One day, as the traveller was seated enjoying himself in the midst of his guards, a native merchant approached, dressed in mean attire, and displaying every external token of poverty, but, accustomed to the devices of the Hindoos, the European took no notice of this fact, and invited the Banian to sit down beside him. He was, of course, a dealer in precious stones, though, apprehensive of the rapacity of the government, or preferring mystery before open dealing, he would not enter upon business in presence of the Mohammedan guards. He had, however, timed his visit well; the hour of prayer approached, when these disciples of Mohammed would, he conjectured, in spite of all earthly considerations, depart to repeat their orisons in the mosque. As soon as the muezzin's voice was heard from a neighbouring minaret summoning the faithful to their devotions, three of the four spies attended to the call; but the fourth, having the fear of the governor before his eyes, remained to observe the dealings of the Frank and the Hindoo. Tavernier, however, was not to be so disappointed; pretending to be without bread, he despatched the Moslem to the town in search of some, and was thus at liberty to converse on business with the Banian.

The Hindoo, now unrolling his long dark hair, drew forth from among its plaits a diamond of so rare a lustre that the traveller was struck with extraordinary admiration. It weighed nearly fifty carats, and its pure transparency appeared to be without flaw; but the money he had with him fell greatly short of the price of so precious a jewel, though he could not restrain himself from gazing at its beauty. 'Do not waste your time,' said the Hindoo, 'but meet me in the evening outside the city walls; bring a sufficient sum along with you, and the diamond shall be yours.' At the time appointed, just as the shades of evening were thickening into night, the merchant, without attendant or witness, repaired to the place of meeting, and the dealer, being true to his word, brought along with him the gem, which Tavernier afterwards sold to a Dutch officer on the Malabar coast for what he called an honest profit, which, in all likelihood, was considerable.

The quickness and penetration of the diamond-dealers of Golconda, which invariably excite the astonishment of strangers, may easily be accounted for by the nature of their business education. At the age of six years, the sons of the dealers commence their studies; not in schools or colleges, but on the public mart. The boys are formed into a sort of guild, at the head of which is the senior of the company. They are each furnished with a bag of gold and a pair of scales, and thus equipped, they seat themselves cross-legged in a circle, and await in silence the coming of the sellers. When a person with any precious stone presents himself, he delivers it to the head of the guild, who, after due deliberation, hands it to the boy next to him in age, and he to the next, until it has made the circuit of the whole body. It is supposed that by some touch of the hand given while passing on the gem, the boys intimate to each other their favourable or unfavourable opinion, for not a word is spoken or a look exchanged, as far as the keenest observer can perceive. The diamond is then weighed, and either bought or rejected. Every day they make up their accounts, and divide the profits equally among them all, save that one quarter per cent. is given in addition to the eldest boy. If, however, he should be unlucky enough to make a bad bargain, the entire loss falls upon him. But so great, as a rule, is their skill, that any member of the guild will, in case of pressure, take at its full price the purchase of any other without the least examination.

Much the same system is pursued by the older dealers, except that they affect greater mystery. It has been already stated that a percentage of the gains made by the dealers is paid to the government; and as eastern rulers are often unscrupulous in all transactions with their subjects, the latter have recourse to the most subtle craft in self-defence. This fact will satisfactorily account for the following mystical method of buying and selling. The nature of the article to be transferred and the denomination of the coin being understood, the seller spreads out the end of his waist-shawl, and places his hand beneath it; the buyer immediately introduces his hand likewise, and the pantomime commences. The use of language on these occasions is entirely abjured, so that, on the Exchange of Golconda, millions may pass from man to man in absolute silence. Two or three hundred merchants, perhaps, seated in couples upon the floor, are engaged in making bargains, which, taken altogether, would represent the wealth of whole kingdoms. When the buyer offers a thousand pagodas, he grasps the entire hand of the seller, and for every thousand gives a separate pressure. If he grasps the fingers only, he means five hundred; one finger, one hundred; from the middle joint, fifty; from the lower, ten. There are masonic tokens for smaller sums, but these seem to have escaped detection. It is obviously practicable for persons who do business after this fashion to estimate their own income-tax in defiance of the government myrmidons, and thus the most opulent of the Hindoos are able to conceal the amount of their riches, and the extent of the transactions they carry on.

Most Asiatics entertain peculiar notions respecting silence, and it was from them, unquestionably, that Pythagoras learned to associate disuse of the tongue with the study of wisdom. At the Borneo diamond-mines there is a superstition connected with this subject, which may be worth mentioning. The persons employed in the washings are enjoined to abstain at least from loud talking, lest they should offend the presiding spirit of the mines, who, in revenge for the disturbance of his repose, might frustrate their search after the riches he dispenses to mortals. Yet all sounds are not displeasing to him: with the voice of a woman's singing his ear is charmed; and if, in addition to a sweet voice, she happen to possess a beautiful countenance, he pours the jewels without stint into her lap.

A complete revolution was brought about in the diamond-trade, in 1844, by the discovery of the mines of Sincura, in Brazil. For ages, it had been known that the diamond was produced in that empire, whence the king of Portugal obtained the gem long regarded as the finest in the world. But in the year above mentioned, accident threw open to the enterprise of the Brazilians what may be denominated the great diamond-fields, which have been not unaptly compared to the valley of Sindebad, and the jewelled gardens of Aladdin. All the social phenomena since witnessed at the diggings of California and Australia, were then exhibited at Sincura. The sugar-growers deserted their works, the merchants their counting-houses, sailors their vessels, and even effeminate gentlemen their pleasures, and rushed to the diamond-mines, where for a while they picked up jewels by handfuls. This new source of wealth was discovered by a slave, who, having collected gems of immense value, travelled a great distance to dispose of them. The avarice of the authorities being thus excited, the slave was seized and thrown into prison, where means—none of the gentlest, we may be sure—were employed to compel him to disclose the site of his discovery. But the obstinacy of the African proved more than an equal match for the cruelty of the Brazilians, though not for their cunning. His escape was purposely connived at, but several Indians were put upon his trail, and these following him like blood-hounds night and day, at length beheld him rooting up for diamonds at the foot of the Sincura Mountains.

What became of the black finder is not stated; but no sooner had it been ascertained that the precious stones really existed there in great abundance, than the population of the province multiplied as if by miracle, swelling in a few months from 8000 to 30,000. To the credit of the government, freedom of search was granted to all comers, which at the outset induced the most fearful desperadoes, robbers, and murderers to engage in the operation. No police existed, provisions were scarce and difficult to be procured, and violence and assassination became common incidents. By degrees, however, a regular police was established, and a certain amount of order introduced, after which the business was conducted in something like a civilised fashion.

Three-fourths of the early exports from Sincura found their way to England, the remainder was distributed through France and Germany, and employed all the lapidaries in Europe for several years. But however abundant may be the mines, the Brazilian gems are inferior in lustre, as well as in dimensions, to the oriental. Those of Paraguaçu are of a dun colour, while such as are found at Lancoës are white or pale green, which are most highly valued in commerce. The flooding of the market occasioned by this discovery, diminished, as might have been expected, the value of diamonds, which, in a few years, sunk 25 or 30 per cent. The chemical experiments, moreover, which have lately been made in all parts of Europe, have deprived this gem of its title to be considered adamantine—incapable of being subdued by the force of the elements. Innumerable experiments, however, have now shewn that a degree of heat insufficient even to affect the polish of the ruby, will reduce the diamond to white ashes. But, though more indestructible, all rubescent gems are inferior to the diamond in beauty. In this quality it still surpasses every species of jewel, not even excepting the opal, which sometimes throws forth a wilderness of brilliant colours in the light. It has been found, in the east, that burning in a moderate fire improves the water of the diamond, and changes its hues from dusky green or beryl yellow to transparent white.

In cutting and polishing these stones, very different processes are followed in different countries. In some, a number of small facets are preferred; whilst in others, the lapidaries aim at producing longitudinal flat surfaces, which permit the rays of light to pass undisturbed into the interior of the gem, where they are met by the rays entering through other faces, and create a commingling of brilliance which appears to kindle before the eye. The objection to this latter mode of cutting is, that it greatly diminishes the weight of the stone, though it undoubtedly gains in splendour what it loses in dimensions. An anecdote is somewhere related of a Venetian lapidary who, having been employed by a prince to cut and polish a diamond, presented it to him so diminished in size, that he ordered him to be put to death. Calculating upon the possibility of such a result, the Venetian had only cut a model in glass, and carried the real diamond in his pocket. This, therefore, he produced to calm the prince's rage; but immediately, by reasoning and argument, convinced him that the jewel, if reduced according to his model, would be worth far more than in the rough state. He was therefore commissioned to do, with the owner's consent, what, had he done it previously, would have cost him his life. Many years afterwards, he used to point jocularly to his wife's necklace, saying: 'There is what my head was thought to be worth by a king!'

A SUSPICIOUS OVERCOAT.

An Englishman's boast is his freedom; with a few trifling exceptions, such as slaveholding and expectorating wherever he pleases, an Englishman is as free as an American. He may be of any politics he chooses; he may profess any or no religion; he may abuse all countries, especially his own, to his heart's content; he may intone the church-service, and wear stoles and chasubles, and crosses and what not, if he can bear being hissed a little; he may wear any covering for the head which he fancies, if only he can make up his mind to bear with equanimity the street-boys' inquiries after his hatter; and of course he may walk in the streets of London on a bright summer-day with a light overcoat thrown over his arm—only then he must take the consequences.

The consequences to my friend Brown were of a very serious description: Brown was taken into custody on a charge of felony for this very offence. It was a particularly hard case, for Brown rather prided himself upon his probity, and had never stolen anything, except a few glances at a pretty woman, since he was at school, and then his thefts had only assumed the modified form of 'cribbing' his lessons. Moreover, Brown came of a family of acknowledged rectitude: his father had been curate of a large parish with a small income; he had discharged his duties to his church and to society in a particularly zealous manner; to the former, by working himself into a consumption, of which he died at the age of thirty-four; and to the latter, by increasing its numbers with a family of seven. Yet the son of such a man, to question whose honour, let alone honesty, were to run a hundred-bladed penknife into the tenderest part of his body, found himself one summer-day in the grasp of a policeman.

Now, it happened on this wise. My friend, John Brown, in July 1857, found himself the fortunate possessor of six weeks' holidays. These he was invited to spend with some kind friends at their house a few miles from London; and this simple incident was the origin of poor Brown's misfortune; for if he had not had to take a short drive into town on the day he left them, he would not have had an overcoat; and if he had not had an overcoat, he would have had no policeman's knuckles in his collar, and no charge of felony to answer. We little know what a day may bring forth: if ever any man took due precaution that he might pass without mishap through any particular four-and-twenty hours, that man was Brown, on the 1st July 1857. He had been more than usually attentive to his private devotions that morning; all his best feelings had been awakened by the recent farewell he had taken of his kindest and dearest friends, and he descended from the vehicle, which stopped at the Royal Exchange, with a conscience void of offence towards everybody; and yet, before six hours had elapsed, he was destined to be dragged by the police along one of the principal streets of London, to the unbounded delight of a mob of vagabonds. From the Royal Exchange, the unconscious felon walked quietly along with his carpet-bag in his hand, and his overcoat upon his arm, to the Grand Cigar Divan in the Strand. Here he took the light refection of a cigar and a cup of coffee without any felonious intention, and also read the *Times* all through—firstly, for the patriotic purpose of seeing how his country was going on, and what was the opinion of the oracle in Printing-house Square upon things in general; secondly, that he might inform himself whether there was anybody dead he knew, which, if it be an offence at all, certainly amounts to no more than a misdemeanour. Having satisfied himself upon these points, the doomed man requested permission to leave his carpet-bag until his return, as he intended to dine at 'Simpson's' in the evening. Leave was given, and an obliging offer was made to take charge of the unhappy overcoat; this Brown declined, 'not knowing:' he was afraid it might get soiled; so the evil spirit prompted him to sally forth, still holding that which was so soon to work him woe.

The demon who had chosen Brown for his shuttlecock that day, now drove him in the direction of St James's Street, to call upon a friend at the J.U.S. Club, which had then temporary accommodation next door to the 'Wellington.' Cheerfully he went to meet his fate, admiring as only a new arrival from the country properly can, the *fumum et opes strepitumque Romæ*, along the Strand, past the National Gallery, down Pall Mall, and up St James's Street. Had he found his friend at the club, he would have been saved; but Fortune had enticed the gallant gentleman away on purpose, and now she perfidiously whispered to Brown that he should pay a visit in the Regent's Park. As a horse, to whom a feed of corn is extended at a distance in the field, stands still, pricks up his ears, advances a few steps, kicks up his heels, and turns away, then trots up nearer, and gradually yields to capture for the sake of a sensual gratification; so Brown stood still and pondered, walked a few strides forward, turned sharply round, and took a few steps back, then turned again and quickened his pace, and ultimately crossed Piccadilly, for he snuffed the luncheon from afar, and for that consideration he determined to submit to confinement in a dismal house for the space of a couple of hours: alas! poor man, he never arrived there! Piously pondering upon the Thirty-nine Articles, for he had some idea of taking holy orders, he wended his way through the Burlington Arcade, and turning to the right, reached Regent Street by Vigo Street. Regent Street is (or rather was) poor Brown's delight; he used to declare he preferred it to the Boulevards; he maintained with warmth that the houses might not be so lofty, perhaps, as those in the Boulevards, and not so regular, but the very irregularity was itself a charm. Was not variety proverbially charming? and suppose it wasn't so long, was there any particular virtue in length? There were many things besides sermons which were better for not being too long, and streets, in his opinion, belonged to them. Upon this particular occasion, however, Brown was too full of luncheon—mentally, I mean, for otherwise he was quite the contrary—to pay much attention to his favourite street; he crossed hastily to the 'sunny' side, and had arrived nearly at the 'circus,' when a young lady fashionably attired, and very good-looking, but with rather more assurance than is considered becoming in any but ladies of very high rank or very low morals, tripped gaily up to him, and said: 'Why, Charles, what are you doing in town?' Now, Brown—whose name, you know, isn't Charles, but John—is a very polite man, if you give him time to collect himself, and would rather have his hair clipped quite close to his head à la convict, than be guilty of abruptness or rudeness to anything—however well-dressed—in the shape of woman: he was proceeding, therefore, to extricate himself by a civil speech from his extraordinary situation, and had just stammered out a few words, when he felt a tap upon his shoulder, administered from behind. He looked over his shoulder, and saw a man, rather under the middle height, with a face bathed in perspiration, the evident consequence of accelerated motion upon a hot summer-day, who remarked curtly: 'You were in my shop just now, sir.' Brown—who could have made an affidavit before the most searching of juries that he had never seen the man before in his life, and who naturally supposed that a recent visitor at the shop had left something there by mistake, which 'the unknown,' like an honourable British tradesman, was anxious to restore—simply told him, civilly, that he was mistaken; and then turned away to finish his explanatory speech to the lady who had done him the honour of claiming his acquaintance; but, lo! the damsel had vanished, and 'the unknown,' darting in front of Brown to impede his progress, continued: 'O yes, you were, and you've something belonging to me either in your pocket or under your coat—I know why you *carry an overcoat in July*.'

Poor Brown's knees were loosened; it flashed across his mind that he had read in the papers how members of the swell-mob hid booty under overcoats, and transferred it to a 'gaily dressed female,' who made off with it securely, and he felt as if the fates had conspired to ruin him for life: his imagination conjured up the vision of a whole column of police reports, in which his own name stood prominently out in connection with the terms, 'Master of Arts,' 'impudent robbery,' 'gay female,' 'holy orders,' and everything incongruous. His first idea, as he afterwards confessed, was to hit 'the unknown' as hard as he could between the eyes, and then fly; but half a moment's reflection convinced him that this would be the worst thing he could do; a cry of 'Stop, thief!' would be raised, and the suspicious circumstances against him would thus be materially increased. 'I therefore,' to use Brown's very words, 'am afraid I forgot all about the Thirty-nine Articles, and swore considerably; then took off my hat, and told "the unknown," in terms too strong for repetition, to take a good look at me, and make sure of his man, for as certainly as he was grossly mistaken, so certainly would I make him answer for his conduct. My vehemence appeared to stagger him a little, but he soon recovered himself, and with the air of determination suitable to a man who has lost his property, and at anyrate caught somebody, he expressed his intention of "going on with it." "Very well," said I, trying to look cool, "there's a police-station close by, and I'll walk there with you." On we went in silence for a yard or two, when he, seeing me so quiet, after a few furtive glances, such as a man casts at a dog of whose temper he isn't quite certain, when he wants to put his collar on, caught hold of my cuff. "Come, come," I said, "I am quite willing to go with you, but you really mustn't touch me. Will you leave go?" "No." I had a tight-fitting glove on, but I doubled my fist as well as I could, and with as much strength as my condition—for I confess I was "all of a tremble"—would allow, I made my right hand intimately acquainted with his nose. The force of the blow was sufficient, I am happy to say, to release me, though at the expense of a rent in my cuff, caused by his weight as he staggered back. Then a scene of confusion arose such as I never wish to be an actor in again at two o'clock P.M. of a July day in Regent Street. "The unknown," after anything but a scientific display of pugnacity, rushed at my throat with cries of "He's stolen my scarfs!" and made an ineffectual attempt to grasp me by the hair, but as that, like *écarté*, is a game for two, I took the liberty of taking a good clutch of his locks with one hand, and putting my other arm round his waist, was seized with an irresistible desire to break his back against the kerb-stone; but though I did my best, my nerves had been so shaken that he did not quite go down; and just as I was proceeding to a second trial, the horny hand of a policeman was inserted in my cravat, and I was gruffly requested to "come along with him." I demanded the free use of my windpipe; this I obtained, and then begged for a cab, as there was a mob collected, yelling and howling in the most disagreeable manner. This Dogberry steadily refused, merely remarking that "he hadn't got no orders about a keb," and my reply that "it wasn't likely he could have, as there was nobody to give him any," was perfectly unavailing; so I was obliged to walk arm-in-arm—for he would persist in believing I wanted to escape—to the nearest police station.

'Here I was put behind an iron machine of some kind, and carefully guarded, whilst "the unknown" enumerated my fabulous crimes. I had been, I found to my astonishment, into his shop, and purchased a scarf, and whilst he turned away to attend to something behind him, I had bolted with the article, retaking the money I had laid down for payment; and I had, moreover, purloined two other scarfs. All this story I of course indignantly declared to be an utter falsehood, but a police-sergeant is impassible. The sergeant in my case evinced no disposition to believe or disbelieve either one side or the other; he simply demanded my name and address, and my accuser's witness. The shop-boy, who was supposed to have beheld my villainous conduct, was summoned, and as soon as he made his appearance, he gave one look at me, and exclaimed to his master: "You've made a mistake, sir; I never saw this gentleman before in my life."

"Here's a pretty business," said the sergeant, tearing up the charge-sheet: "the charge is dismissed, of course."

"Not at all," said I. "I told this man he should answer for it, and I insist upon being taken to the nearest magistrate."

'A cab was sent for, and away we went to Marlborough Street. My reception there was anything but flattering; I was told to sit down upon a bench, and as I sat and ruminated, an official inquired: "Whose *man* is this, and what's the charge?" My captor answered: "Mine—felony!"

"It's an infamous lie!" I shouted. "A man has made a false charge against me, and I want the magistrate's advice."

"That's a very different story," said the official. "Come along with me, please."

'So we were ushered into the magistrate's presence, where I made a vehement harangue about my grievances, to which I must say the magistrate listened very patiently and courteously, and when I had done, said sternly: "Policeman, what is the charge?"

'Again my captor, who, in common with most constables, I believe, seemed, contrary to the principles of British law, to consider every prisoner guilty until he is proved not guilty, and even when he is, gave his former laconic reply: "Felony, your worship."

'I burst out afresh, but was checked by the magistrate, who asked "the unknown" if he meant to proceed with the charge.

'He shook his head, and muttered that he had made a mistake; and he looked so utterly miserable that I felt inclined to forgive him. Had his nose been visibly swollen—for though I am not a vindictive man, I must say I examined that feature attentively—I would; but it did not appear so to me, so I begged the magistrate to tell me how I could obtain redress.

"Oh, you can have your civil action, sir, if you like; you had better consult a solicitor.—And as for you, sir," he said, turning to the unknown, "you must take care what you do in this country. If you bring charges of felony against people with no better reason for suspecting them than because they are like other people in build, are accosted by improper characters in the street, and carry overcoats upon their arms, you will some day find yourself in a very unpleasant predicament."

'I thanked the magistrate, demanded my persecutor's name and address, and commenced my triumphal exit from the court. How differently was I treated now! A particularly stolid policeman, laying his forefinger on his nose, and motioning me with a wink and a smile into a corner, whispered: "You go to Lewis—he 'll get you a 'unded pound."

'Another official, who had contemptuously measured me from head to foot as I entered, now came up to congratulate me, and to enforce the policeman's advice, saying, as he did so, to a friend: "Here 's a blessed tradesman been falsely charging a gentleman: he should go to Lewis, shouldn't he?"

'Coldly declining their officious advice, I dashed into the street. "Hurray!" cried the little boys who had followed me to the court—"Hurray! give us a copper, your honour." "I said it wa'n't you. I offered to bet a farden it wa'n't—didn't I, Bill?" "And I picked up yer 'at," said another. "That gen'lman steal anythink!" roared a full-grown man; "why, he looks as if he 'd be more likely to stand a quart."

'However, I was deaf to flattery; and calling a cab, drove away to the city, to a friend I had there who was an eminent solicitor. By his advice, I did not bring a civil action against "the unknown;" for with legal nonchalance, he pointed out how it was simply a case of mistaken identity, and that a civil action would look vindictive; so "the unknown" was allowed to compromise the matter by giving me a written apology, and paying a sum of money to the poor-box.'

Thus was poor Brown the victim of his overcoat; and I really believe he cannot look upon a policeman or walk down Regent Street without a shudder, even unto this day.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE recent poisoning cases, though no longer exciting public attention, are not forgotten among those by whom it is most to be desired they should be remembered—namely, men of science; for if it be true that the poisoner's skill has outrun the means of detection, so much the more need is there that chemistry should make a step in advance. This step, however, can only be made after a series of experiments of a highly refined character have been carried out; such as will enable the chemist in his laboratory to detect the subtlest cases. Results of this importance, involving a considerable amount of expense and labour, are beyond what we commonly expect from spontaneous individual research; and the subject is felt to be one which should be taken in hand by government. Let the proper authorities appoint a commission of two or three of our most competent chemists to work out a more perfect method of analysis than that at present in use, and pay them sufficiently, and there is good reason to believe that the result would be accomplished. Seeing that the public at large would be benefited by the result, there seems nothing unreasonable in looking to the public purse for payment; yet, taught by experience, no one is solicitous to bring the question forward, seeing how prone some feeble-minded members of parliament are to get up and oppose any scientific grant, especially one for the purpose of testing the effects of poison on animals, by the remark, at which the House is sure to laugh, that 'we don't want the public money wasted in poisoning dogs and cats.' It is only at times, and by a struggle, that the thousand pounds set down in the estimates for the encouragement of science does actually get voted; and yet the appropriation of that sum has hitherto rendered singular service to the mechanical, astronomical, and physical and chemical sciences. The poison-question is, however, of that importance that we trust it will not be allowed to slumber; and we make these remarks in the hope that it will be kept awake. We recommend it as a proper one for discussion to *The Chemical News*, a periodical which is to be supported by chemists in all parts of the realm.

It seems probable that the question of steam-tillage will be settled before that of the economy and science of manures, for land has been ploughed, broken up, scarified, and otherwise treated by steam-power, with a notable saving of time and labour, while the work itself was better done than in the ordinary way. One proprietor was so well satisfied therewith, that he prepared twelve hundred acres by machinery. But as to the manure-question, authorities disagree; some, pointing to the Chinese, contend that the sewage of towns should be applied to the land, and not allowed to run to waste; others argue that the cost would be too great, and the result inadequate. One thing is certain, that Professors Frankland and Hofmann of London, who were appointed to inquire into the subject last summer, came to the conclusion, that town-sewage, owing to its deficiency of nitrogenous matter, would not pay for conversion into manure. The experiments made a few years ago at Manchester are worth remembering: arrangements were made for collecting the solid excretæ only of sundry factories in boxes, which were removed once a week. These excretæ were a free gift to the manufacturers; the cost of transport to the manure-works, one and a half mile, was half-a-crown a ton; yet the sum of real nitrogenous matter was found to be so small in proportion to bulk, that it was cheaper to buy sulphate of ammonia and superphosphate of lime at the market-price, and mix them with the fertilising materials, than to use the excretæ which cost nothing but the cartage. Another fact is worth notice: in a report sent from Newfoundland to the Duke of Newcastle, it is stated that 350,000 hundred-weights of fish-offal can be had every year from that colony for conversion into artificial guano.

No traveller having come forward from love of geographical science to discover an overland route from Algeria to Senegal, the French government, desirous of establishing direct intercourse between these two of their African possessions, have now offered a prize to any explorer who will undertake and accomplish the task.—The latest news from Dr Baikie's Niger expedition informs us that all his steamers had safely passed up through the delta, and the doctor himself was at Rabbah, endeavouring to establish a trade with the natives.—Private letters from Consul Livingstone, read at the meeting of the Geographical Society by Sir Roderick Murchison, convey interesting particulars: the party had found the Zambesi navigable beyond their expectations, and had explored in all 2350 miles of river. Prospects of trade were very promising; of elephants' tusks alone, nearly 6000 had been sent down the river from June of 1858 to the same month of 1859. Cotton and sugar were also abundant. The party were the first white men ever seen at Shirwa. The sugar-trade alone, between Africa and Europe may, if continental rulers will only be wise in matters of political economy, grow to a prodigious extent. Fond as the French are of sugar, France consumes annually not more than 180,000 tons, while the United States, with fewer inhabitants by ten millions, consumes 431,000 tons.—From Australia, we hear that two newly organised parties have left Adelaide in hope of realising the often-attempted project of getting directly across to the Gulf of Carpentaria on the north. Great expectations are entertained from these expeditions, owing to the recent discoveries of fertile grass-lands in the interior, where the whole region had been supposed to be a scorching, arid desert.—There is something to report, too, of a country nearer home: in 1834, the olive-trees in Greece numbered somewhat more than 1,000,000; now, they are nearly 8,000,000; and the 440 ships, of an aggregate of 52,000 tons, have multiplied into 4339, making 325,000 tons. Some of the Ionians are finding it better to cultivate currants than to play at politics; the export of currants from Greece last year, 1858, was 62,500,000 pounds, and we are told that this large quantity may easily be doubled when the trees have recovered from their epidemic, and the inhabitants take pains with their culture.

Astronomers are interested in the news that the auroræ, or at least some of them, which have appeared so remarkably in our hemisphere during the past four months, were seen also in the southern hemisphere, where such phenomena are exceedingly rare.—A Russian astronomer, after careful study and examination of Mr De la Rue's photographs of the moon, confirms the notion first suggested by Hansen of the Seeberg Observatory, that our satellite is not a sphere, but egg-shaped, which fact—if it be a fact—makes it easier than heretofore to explain why we see always but one and the same lunar face, by reason of the position of the centre of gravity. The Russian savant's papers on the subject have been read before the Astronomical Society. Mr De la Rue having succeeded so well with his moon-photographs, took the sun's likeness a short time since from the Kew Observatory. It presents a striking contrast to the rugged visage of the moon, being smooth as a billiard ball, with a few minute specks, being the solar spots infinitely minimised.

Every month brings further demonstration of the economy effected by the use of super-heated steam—a subject to which, on account of its importance, we have frequently called attention. The Peninsular and Oriental Company have introduced the principle into three of their steamers, and will apply it to the rest of their fleet as fast as a vessel can be spared to lie idle for three weeks—the time required for the alteration. When accomplished, there will be a clear saving of many thousands a year in the article of coal. The outlay for coal may be inferred from the fact, that not long ago the Company had 283 coal-laden ships at sea at the same time, bearing cargoes to their several dépôts.—The advantage of steam over sail is shewn in an incident of the Newcastle trade: some years ago, a Northumbrian coal-owner employed eighteen sailing colliers, which carried to London 54,000 tons of coal a year; the same quantity is now conveyed by two steam-colliers of 800 tons each.—Improved locomotives are building at the Stephenson Works, Newcastle, for the Great Northern Railway, which are to burn coal, and consume the smoke. Meanwhile, the experiments instituted to achieve a smoke-consuming locomotive, are still industriously carried on in the northern counties, with promise of success.—The Armstrong crane is growing more and more into consideration as well as the Armstrong gun; hydraulic cranes are erected in the new docks lately opened at Swansea; and the advantages derivable are exemplified by the results at Woolwich. Ten hydraulic cranes were set up on the arsenal wharf during the Crimean war, at a total cost of L.30,000. With these, vessels could be loaded direct, instead of by the former tedious and expensive two-fold process with lighters; and in consequence, the saving in demurrage per day while loading, in a short time covered the whole cost of the cranes.—The *Ariadne* steamer, now fitting out at Chatham, will be the first vessel equipped with the Armstrong guns. Tremendous is the armament in preparation. She is to carry on her main-deck twenty-four guns, each 9 feet 4 inches long, and weighing 84 cwt.; and on the upper deck, two 68-pounders, 10 feet 2 inches long, weighing 95 cwt. each. With these, the *Ariadne* may steam through the Straits of Gibraltar, and send a ball at the same time to the two Pillars of Hercules.—Apropos of Chatham, some wise measures have been taken to provide amusing and instructive recreations for the troops, which, judging from present results, are likely to be very beneficial. Besides the reading-room, an evening drawing-class has been established for the Royal and Indian Engineers; the drawing is, of course, military, including fortification; but it will accustom the men to the use of the pencil, and lead probably to other improving results. A theatre has also been opened within the barrack-walls.—Sheffield, exercising its ingenuity, has recently manufactured steel kettle-drums, which have been approved and introduced into the army; and a firm in the same busy town have demonstrated that good bells can be made of steel. They have already cast 1800. Steel is cheaper then bell-metal, and stronger, whereby the weight of a bell may be materially diminished.

Mr Darwin's *Origin of Species* has now been some five weeks before the public, and is eagerly sought after by scientific men and thinkers generally. The book, in fact, is making a sensation; and the author must prepare to hear himself criticised—dogmatically by some; doubtfully, acceptingly, and perversely by others. Some scientific men are ready to accept his views in so far as they admit of several originals, though few, and dispute the single 'primordial form;' while others, who have long laboured at the philosophy of natural history, consider that the opinions of so thoughtful a naturalist as Mr Darwin, whose mind has been engaged on the subject for half a lifetime, may be received as safe conclusions. The bulk of the criticism and discussion is, however, yet to come; and we shall have something to report thereon in a future *Month*. Meanwhile, as shewing what Mr Darwin's conclusions are, and the points whereon most question will be raised, we quote a passage from his summing-up. 'I cannot doubt,' he says, 'that the theory of descent with modification embraces all the members of the same class. I believe that animals have descended from at most only four or five progenitors, and plants from an equal or lesser number.'

'Analogy would lead me one step further, namely, to the belief that all animals and plants have descended from some one prototype. But analogy may be a deceitful guide. Nevertheless, all living things have much in common, in their chemical composition, their germinal vesicles, their cellular structure, and their laws of growth and reproduction. We see this even in so trifling a circumstance as that the same poison often similarly affects plants and animals; or that the poison secreted by the gall-fly produces monstrous growths on the wild-rose or oak-tree. Therefore, I should infer from analogy that probably all the organic beings that have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed.'

That terrible calamity, the wreck of the *Royal Charter*, will probably lead to discussion as to the stability of iron ships, and to the changes producible in the condition and structure of iron by the rolling in a gale, the shock of waves, and vibration of the screw. That some weakening effect is produced, is more than probable. In the late Dr Scoresby's *Journal of a Voyage to Australia, and Round the World, for Magnetical Research*, in that ill-fated vessel, there are incidental remarks bearing on this vitally important question. Sundry failures of the iron-work are mentioned; but there is one passage which seems to indicate something more than a disagreeable effect from the motion of the screw, and may help to explain the quick parting of the vessel amidships: and quoting this, we conclude our series for the present eventful year. Thus the doctor writes: 'Sometimes this shaking, attended by a disagreeable noise, occurred under different circumstances—where, under incidental freshening of the breeze, the action of the sails overran the speed of the screw, and where in the violent lifting or heaving of the stern-frame the proper and ordinary revolutions of the screw were interfered with. The disadvantage was ascribed to the fact of the direct action of the engine with nothing of intermediate and yielding contacts to break the force of the incongruous contacts and operation of the water. The effect was often such as to cause the ship perceptibly to shake in the manner of an elastic flexure as, apparently to sensation, of some inches up and down, giving correspondent vibration in the spanker-boom, as supported at the two ends, amounting to a spring-like movement of the intermediate timber up and down.'

TO OLD FRIENDS AND NEW.

The average age of man has been tolerably well ascertained by the Insurance Offices. The average age of a literary periodical has yet to be discovered, and when found, will probably interest the Insurance Offices very little. What Hail and Fire Office could be got to insure it against Party Rancour? What Wind Protection Society against the veering blasts of Public Taste? What Association for the Suppression of Felony against those Thieves of Literature—the Plagiarists? The calculations would, at all events, be different from those connected with Human Life, since the younger the journal, the higher would be its Premium: the mortality among youthful periodicals being extreme, even to the extent, as has been known, in some unhappy cases, of dying before they are born.

It is very long ago indeed since *Chambers's Journal* emerged safely from the maladies peculiar to infant Literary Life. He cut his first tooth about Eight-and-twenty years ago, and has therefore attained an age, we believe, quite unequalled by any periodical of his class. Presenting, however, the best compliments of the season to both his Old and New Friends, and apologising to literary rivals who may have been expecting to hear 'something to their advantage,' he begs to intimate at the same time that he is not going to die yet by any means. It is possible that some alterations may take place in him during the ensuing century, if the public taste of that far-distant future should reasonably demand them; but these will be rather in the direction o enlargement than of diminution, and far less of deceas In the meantime, 'Chambers' has one confession t make: He has for some time past been surprised t find the type which served him in greener days, appea smaller and more difficult to read than it used to do Many of his first subscribers — of whom a goodly number still remain attached—expressed the sam difficulty; so he could no longer doubt that there wa something in it. A fount of clear, readable type ha therefore been procured, wherewith to celebrate hi Nine-and-twentieth birthday. From that new Foun will flow, as we humbly hope, the same clear stream of healthful Literature as of old; bright, broad, and deep, as such should ever flow. It is believed tha even a greater amount of spirit will be found to b mixed with them than heretofore. May the drinkers be as numerous as ever; equally welcome whether they come with crystal goblet or with earthen pitcher; fo *Chambers's Journal* is meant for Rich and Poor!

CHRISTMAS SONNET.

TO THE RICH.

Hast thou not aught to spare, now the rude wind
Thrusts his cold fingers to the wanderer's heart?
Shall it be then less cruel than thou art,
Unto thy wretched brother's sufferings blind?
Relieved by thee, the steward for God, thou'dst find
A savour permeate thy sumptuous feast
Which all the spices of the golden East
Would fail to give. To keep in tune the mind—
Without which banquets are a mockery—
To make life's wilderness laugh out with flowers,
And thee feel summer through the wintriest hours,
There's nought so potent as sweet Charity.
Keep, and you lose; give, and you gain. Mark this!
Who yieldeth happiness, secureth bliss.

J. E.

On Saturday, the 7th of January 1860, *will be commenc*
in this Journal,
A STORY, entitled

THE BATEMAN HOUSEHOLD, AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

By JAMES PAYN,
AUTHOR OF 'STORIES AND SKETCHES,' &c. &c.
To be continued every week until completed.

The present number of the Journal completes the Twelft Volume; a title-page and index prepared for it may be had the publishers and their agents.

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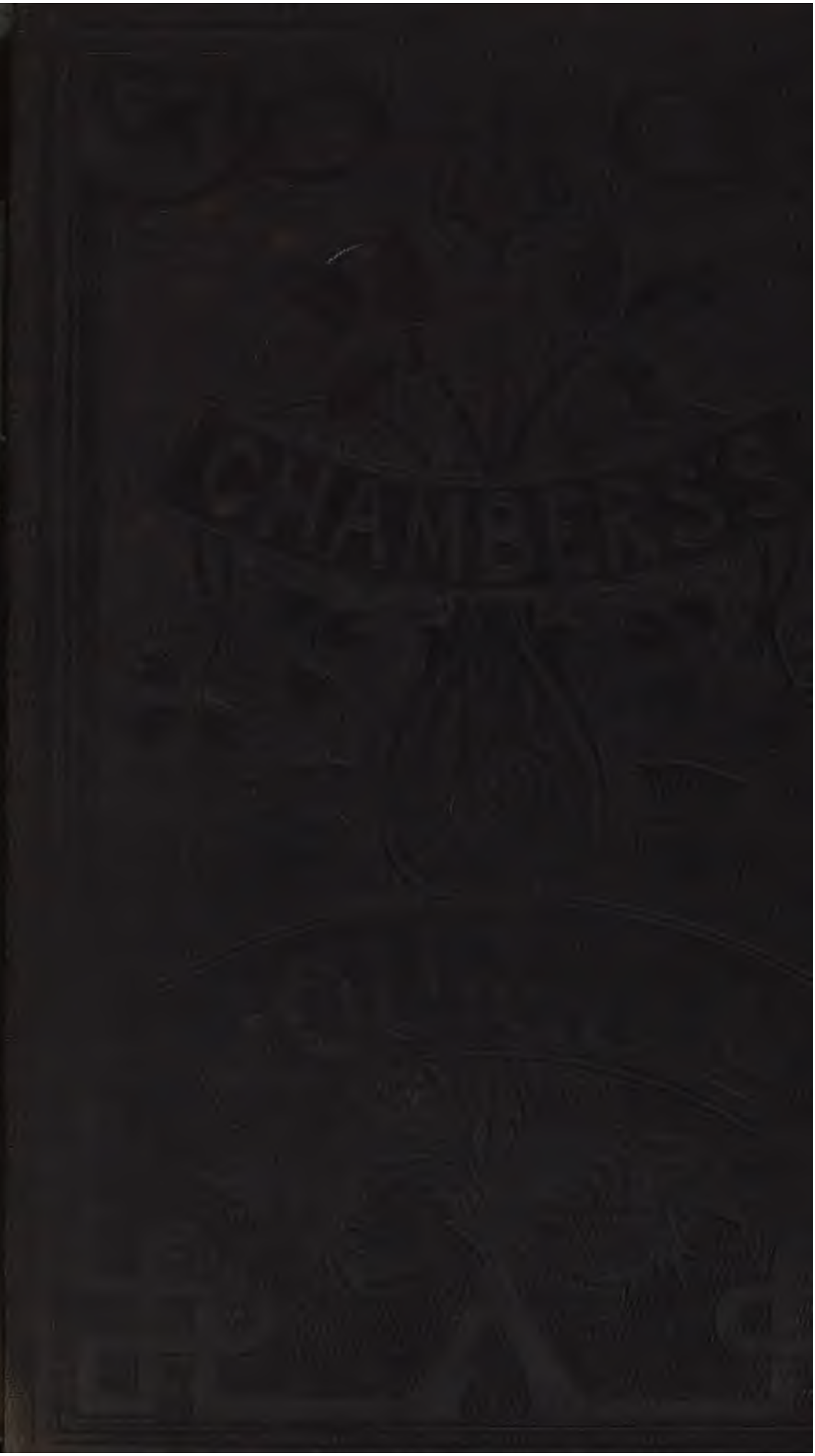
CHAMBERS'S